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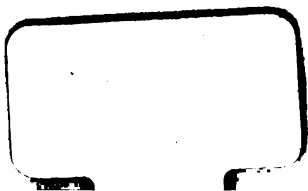
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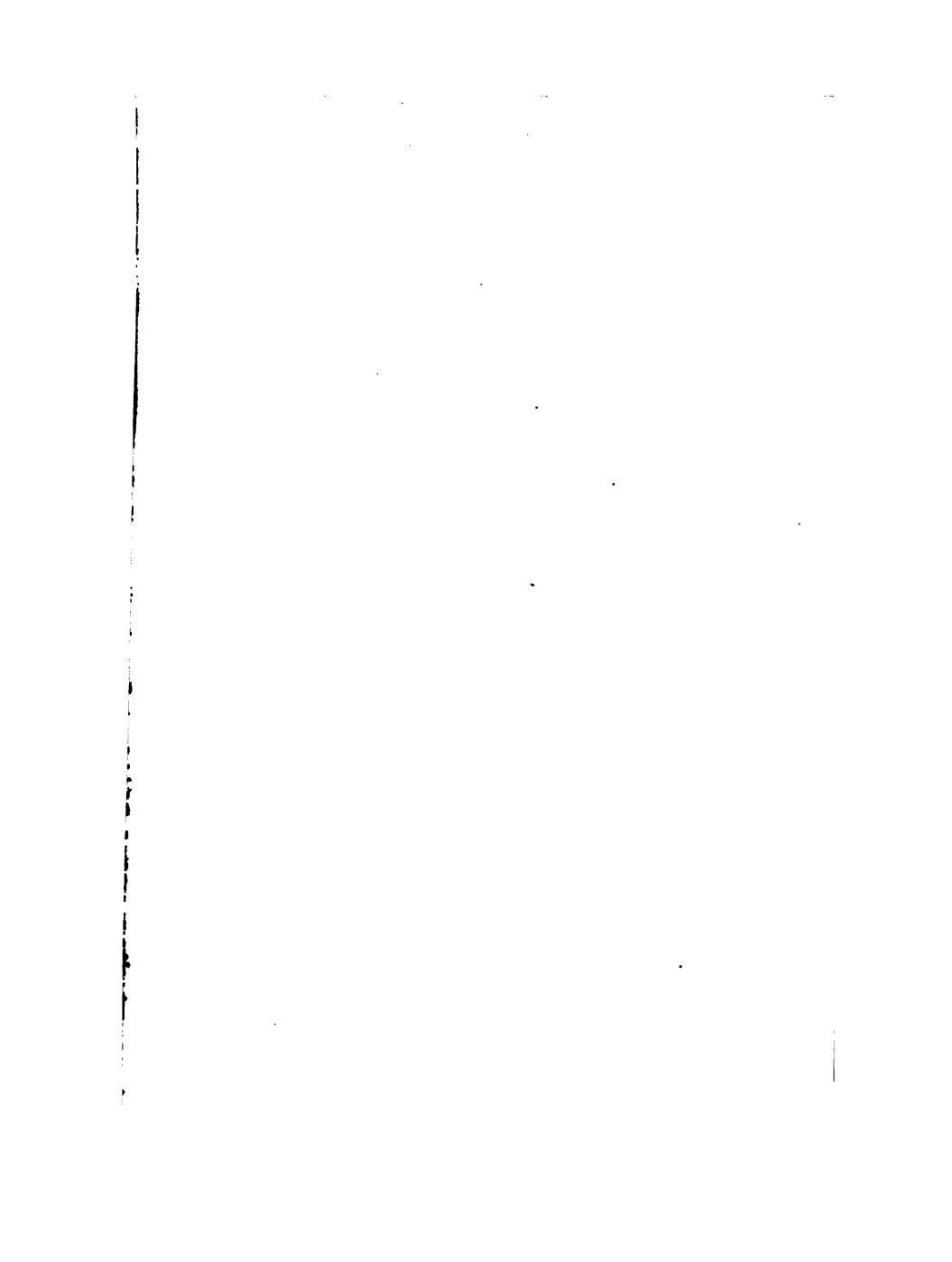


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A SHORT HISTORY  
OF  
OUR OWN TIMES

FROM THE  
ACCESSION OF QUEEN VICTORIA  
TO THE GENERAL ELECTION OF 1880

BY  
JUSTIN MCCARTHY, M.P.

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. I.

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# A SHORT HISTORY OF OUR OWN TIMES.

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## CHAPTER I. A NEW REIGN OPENS.

BEFORE half-past two o'clock on the morning of June 20, 1837, William IV. was lying dead in Windsor Castle, while the messengers were already hurrying off to Kensington Palace to bear to his successor her summons to the throne. With William ended the reign of personal government in England. King William had always held to and exercised the right to dismiss ministers when he pleased, and because he pleased. In our day we should believe that the constitutional freedom of England was outraged, if a sovereign were to dismiss a ministry at mere pleasure, or to retain it in despite of the expressed wish of the House of Commons.

The manners of William IV. had been, like those of most of his brothers, somewhat rough and overbearing. He had been an unmanageable naval officer. He had made himself unpopular while Duke of Clarence by his strenuous opposition to some of the measures which were especially desired by all the enlightenment of the country.



He was, for example, a determined opponent of the measures for the abolition of the slave trade. But William seems to have been one of the men whom increased responsibility improves. He was far better as a king than as a prince. He proved that he was able at least to understand that first duty of a constitutional sovereign which, to the last day of his active life, his father, George III., never could be brought to comprehend—that the personal predilections and prejudices of the King must sometimes give way to the public interest. We must judge William by the reigns that went before, and not the reign that came after him, and admit that on the whole he was better than his education, his early opportunities, and his early promise.

William IV. (third son of George III.) had left no children who could have succeeded to the throne, and the crown passed therefore to the daughter of his brother (fourth son of George), the Duke of Kent. This was the Princess Alexandrina Victoria, who was born at Kensington Palace on May 24, 1819. The Princess was therefore at this time little more than eighteen years of age. The Duke of Kent died a few months after the birth of his daughter, and the child was brought up under the care of his widow. She was well brought up: both as regards her intellect and her character—her training was excellent. She was taught to be self-reliant, brave, and systematical. Prudence and economy were inculcated on her as though she had been born to be poor. One is not generally inclined to attach much importance to what historians tell us of the education of contemporary princes or princesses; but it cannot be doubted that the Princess Victoria was trained for intelligence and goodness.

There is a pretty description given by Miss Wynn of

the manner in which the young sovereign received the news of her accession to a throne. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Howley, and the Lord Chamberlain, the Marquis of Conyngham, left Windsor for Kensington Palace, where the Princess Victoria had been residing, to inform her of the King's death. It was two hours after midnight when they started, and they did not reach Kensington until five o'clock in the morning. "They knocked, they rang, they thumped for a considerable time before they could rouse the porter at the gate; they were again kept waiting in the courtyard, then turned into one of the lower rooms, where they seemed forgotten by everybody. They rang the bell, and desired that the attendant of the Princess Victoria might be sent to inform her Royal Highness that they requested an audience on business of importance. After another delay, and another ringing to inquire the cause, the attendant was summoned, who stated that the Princess was in such a sweet sleep that she could not venture to disturb her. Then they said, 'We are come on business of State to the Queen, and even her sleep must give way to that.' It did; and to prove that she did not keep them waiting, in a few minutes she came into the room in a loose white nightgown and shawl, her nightcap thrown off, and her hair falling upon her shoulders, her feet in slippers, tears in her eyes, but perfectly collected and dignified." The Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, was presently sent for, and a meeting of the Privy Council summoned for eleven o'clock, when the Lord Chancellor administered the usual oaths to the Queen, and her Majesty received in return the oaths of allegiance of the Cabinet ministers and other privy councillors present.

The interest or curiosity with which the demeanour

of the young Queen was watched was all the keener because the world in general knew so little about her. Not merely was the world in general thus ignorant, but even the statesmen and officials in closest communication with court circles were in almost absolute ignorance. The young Queen had been previously kept in such seclusion by her mother, that "not one of her acquaintance, none of the attendants at Kensington, not even the Duchess of Northumberland, her governess, have any idea what she is or what she promises to be." There was enough in the court of the two sovereigns who went before Queen Victoria to justify any strictness of seclusion which the Duchess of Kent might desire for her daughter. No one can read even the most favourable descriptions given by contemporaries of the manners of those two courts without feeling grateful to the Duchess of Kent for resolving that her daughter should see as little as possible of their ways and their company.

It is not necessary to go into any formal description of the proclamation of the Queen, her appearance for the first time on the throne in the House of Lords when she prorogued Parliament in person, and even the gorgeous festival of her coronation, which took place on June 28, in the following year, 1838. It is a fact, however, well worthy of note, amid whatever records of court ceremonial and of political change, that a few days after the accession of the Queen, Mr. Montefiore was elected Sheriff of London, the first Jew who had ever been chosen for that office; and that he received knighthood at the hands of her Majesty when she visited the City on the following Lord Mayor's day. He was the first Jew whom royalty had honoured in this country since the good old times when royalty was pleased to borrow the Jew's money, or order instead the extraction

of his teeth. The expansion of the principle of religious liberty and equality which has been one of the most remarkable characteristics of the reign of Queen Victoria, could hardly have been more becomingly inaugurated than by the compliment which sovereign and city paid to Sir Moses Montefiore.

The first signature attached to the Act of Allegiance presented to the Queen at Kensington Palace was that of her eldest surviving uncle, Ernest, Duke of Cumberland. The fact may be taken as an excuse for introducing a few words here to record the severance of the connection which had existed for some generations between this country and Hanover. The connection was only personal, the Hanoverian kings of England being also by succession sovereigns of Hanover. The crown of Hanover was limited in its descent to the male line, and it passed on the death of William IV. to his eldest surviving brother, Ernest, Duke of Cumberland. The change was in almost every way satisfactory to the English people. The indirect connection between England and Hanover had at no time been a matter of gratification to the public of this country, and Englishmen were not by any means sorry to be rid of the Duke of Cumberland. Not many of George III.'s sons were popular; the Duke of Cumberland was probably the least popular of all. His manners were rude, overbearing, and sometimes even brutal. Rumour not unnaturally exaggerated his defects, and in the mouths of many his name was the symbol of the darkest and fiercest passions, and even crimes. Some of the popular reports with regard to him had their foundation only in the common detestation of his character and dread of his influence. But it is certain that he was profligate, selfish, overbearing and quarrelsome.

It was felt in England that the mere departure of the Duke of Cumberland from this country would have made the severance of the connection with Hanover desirable, even if it had not been in other ways an advantage to us. Later times have shown how much we have gained by the separation. It would have been exceedingly inconvenient, to say the least, if the crown worn by a sovereign of England had been hazarded in the war between Austria and Prussia in 1866. Our reigning family must have seemed to suffer in dignity if that crown had been roughly knocked off the head of its wearer who happened to be an English sovereign; and it would have been absurd to expect that the English people could engage in a quarrel with which their interests and honour had absolutely nothing to do, for the sake of a mere family possession of their ruling house.

Lord Melbourne was the first Minister of the Crown when the Queen succeeded to the throne. He was a man who then and always after made himself particularly dear to the Queen, and for whom she had the strongest regard. He was of kindly, somewhat indolent nature; fair and even generous towards his political opponents; of the most genial disposition towards his friends. He was emphatically not a strong man. He was not a man to make good grow where it was not already growing. He was a kindly counsellor to a young Queen; and happily for herself the young Queen in this case had strong clear sense enough of her own not to be absolutely dependent on any counsel. Lord Melbourne was not a statesman. His best qualities, personal kindness and good nature apart, were purely negative. He was unfortunately not content even with the reputation for a sort of indolent good nature which he might have well deserved. He strove to make himself appear hopelessly

idle, trivial, and careless. When he really was serious and earnest he seemed to make it his business to look like one in whom no human affairs could call up a gleam of interest. We have amusing pictures of him as he occupied himself in blowing a feather or nursing a sofa-cushion while receiving an important and perhaps highly sensitive deputation from this or that commercial "interest." Those who knew him insisted that he really was listening with all his might and main; that he had sat up the whole night before studying the question which he seemed to think so unworthy of any attention; and that so far from being wholly absorbed in his trifles, he was at very great pains to keep up the appearance of a trifler.

Such a masquerading might perhaps have been excusable, or even attractive, in the case of a man of really brilliant and commanding talents. But in Lord Melbourne's case the affectation had no such excuse or happy effect. He was a poor speaker, only fitted to rule in the quietest times. Debates were then conducted with a bitterness of personality unknown, or at all events very rarely known, in our days. Even in the House of Lords language was often interchanged of the most virulent hostility.

Lord Melbourne's constant attendance on the young Queen was regarded with keen jealousy and dissatisfaction. According to some critics the Prime Minister was endeavouring to inspire her with all his own gay heedlessness of character and temperament. According to others, Lord Melbourne's purpose was to make himself agreeable and indispensable to the Queen; to surround her with his friends, relations, and creatures, and thus to get a lifelong hold of power in England, in defiance

of political changes and parties. But he does not appear to have been greedy of power, or to have used any unfair means of getting or keeping it. The character of the young Sovereign seems to have impressed him deeply. His real or affected levity gave way to a genuine and lasting desire to make her life as happy and her reign as successful as he could. The Queen always felt the warmest affection and gratitude for him. Still, it is certain that the Queen's Prime Minister was by no means a popular man at the time of her accession. When the new reign began, the Ministry had two enemies or critics in the House of Lords of the most formidable character. Either alone would have been a trouble to a minister of far stronger mould than Lord Melbourne; but circumstances threw them both for the moment into a chance alliance against him.

One of these was Lord Brougham. No character stronger and stranger than his is described in the modern history of England. He was gifted with the most varied and striking talents, and with a capacity for labour which sometimes seemed almost superhuman. Not merely had he the capacity for labour, but he appeared to have a positive passion for work. His restless energy seemed as if it must stretch itself out on every side seeking new fields of conquest. The study that was enough to occupy the whole time and wear out the frame of other men was only recreation to him. His physical strength never gave way. His high spirits never deserted him. His self-confidence was boundless. He thought he knew everything and could do everything better than any other man. His vanity was overweening, and made him ridiculous almost as often and as much as his genius made him admired. "If Brougham knew a little of law," said O'Connell, when the former became

Lord Chancellor, "he would know a little of everything." The anecdote is told in another way too, which perhaps makes it even more piquant. "The new Lord Chancellor knows a little of everything in the world—even of law." He was beyond doubt a great Parliamentary orator, although not an orator of the highest class. Brougham's action was wild, and sometimes even furious; his gestures were singularly ungraceful; his manners were grotesque; but of his power over his hearers there could be no doubt. That power remained with him until a far later date; and long after the years when men usually continue to take part in political debate, Lord Brougham could be impassioned, impressive, and even overwhelming. If his talents were great, if his personal vanity was immense, let it be said that his services to the cause of human freedom and education were simply inestimable. As an opponent of slavery in the colonies, as an advocate of political reform at home, of law reform, of popular education, of religious equality, he had worked with indomitable zeal, with resistless passion, and with splendid success. He was left out of office on the reconstruction of the Whig Ministry in April 1835, and he passed for the remainder of his life into the position of an independent or unattached critic of the measures and policy of other men. It has never been clearly known why the Whigs so suddenly threw over Brougham. The common belief is that his eccentricities and his almost savage temper made him intolerable in a cabinet. It has been darkly hinted that for a while his intellect was actually under a cloud, as people said that of Chatham was during a momentous season. Lord Brougham was not a man likely to forget or forgive the wrong which he must have believed that he had sustained at the hands of the Whigs. He became



the fiercest and most formidable of Lord Melbourne's hostile critics.

The other great opponent was Lord Lyndhurst. He was one of the most effective Parliamentary debaters of his time. His style was singularly and even severely clear, direct and pure; his manner was easy and graceful; his voice remarkably sweet and strong. Nothing could have been in greater contrast than his clear, correct, nervous argument, and the impassioned invectives and overwhelming strength of Brougham. Lyndhurst had an immense capacity for work, when the work had to be done; but his natural tendency was as distinctly towards indolence as Brougham's was towards unresting activity. Nor were Lyndhurst's political convictions ever very clear. By the habitude of associating with the Tories, and receiving office from them, and speaking for them, and attacking their enemies with argument and sarcasm, Lyndhurst finally settled down into all the ways of Toryism. But nothing in his varied history showed that he had any particular preference that way; and there were many passages in his career when it would seem as if a turn of chance decided what part of political life he was to follow. As a keen debater he was perhaps hardly ever excelled in Parliament; but he had neither the passion nor the genius of the orator; and his capacity was narrow indeed in its range when compared with the astonishing versatility and omnivorous mental activity of Brougham. As a speaker he was always equal. He seemed to know no varying moods or fits of mental lassitude. Whenever he spoke he reached at once the same high level as a debater. The very fact may in itself perhaps be taken as conclusive evidence that he was not an orator. The higher qualities of the orator are no more to be summoned at will than those of the poet.

These two men were without any comparison the two leading debaters in the House of Lords. Lord Melbourne had not at that time in the Upper House a single man of first class or even of second class debating power on the bench of the ministry. An able writer has well remarked that the position of the Ministry in the House of Lords might be compared to that of a water-logged wreck into which enemies from all quarters are pouring their broadsides.

The law at that time made it necessary that a new Parliament should be summoned on the accession of the new Sovereign. The result was not a very marked alteration in the condition of parties; but on the whole the advantage was with the Tories. Somewhere about this time, it may be remarked, the use of the word "Conservative" to describe the latter political party first came into fashion. During the elections for the new Parliament, Lord John Russell, speaking at a public dinner at Stroud, made allusion to the new name which his opponents were beginning to affect for their party. "If that," he said, "is the name that pleases them, if they say that the old distinction of Whig and Tory should no longer be kept up, I am ready, in opposition to their name of Conservative, to take the name of Reformer, and to stand by that opposition."

The new Parliament on its assembling seems to have gathered in the Commons an unusually large number of gifted and promising men. Mr. Grote, the historian of Greece, sat for the City of London. The late Lord Lytton, then Mr. Edward Lytton Bulwer, had a seat, an advanced Radical at that day. Mr. Disraeli came then into Parliament for the first time. Charles Buller, full of high spirits, brilliant humour, and the very inspiration of keen good sense, seemed on the sure way to that career

of renown which a premature death cut short. Sir William Molesworth was an excellent type of the school which in later days was called the Philosophical Radical. Another distinguished member of the same school, Mr. Roebuck, had lost his seat, and was for the moment an outsider. Mr. Gladstone had been already five years in Parliament. The late Lord Carlisle, then Lord Morpeth, was looked upon as a graceful specimen of the literary and artistic young nobleman, who also cultivates a little politics for his intellectual amusement. Lord John Russell had but lately begun his career as leader of the House of Commons. Lord Palmerston was Foreign Secretary, but had not even then got the credit of the great ability which he possessed. Only those who knew him very well had any idea of the capacity for governing Parliament and the country which he was soon afterwards to display. Sir Robert Peel was leader of the Conservative party. Lord Stanley, the late Lord Derby, was still in the House of Commons. He had not long before broken definitely with the Whigs on the question of the Irish ecclesiastical establishment, and had passed over to that Conservative party of which he afterwards became the most influential leader, and the most powerful Parliamentary orator.

The ministry was not very strong in the House of Commons. Its adherents were but loosely held together. Sir Robert Peel, the leader of the Opposition, was by far the most powerful man in the House. Added to his great qualities as an administrator and a Parliamentary debater, he had the virtue, then very rare among Conservative statesmen, of being a sound and clear financier, with a good grasp of the fundamental principles of political economy. His high austere character made him respected by opponents as well as by friends. He had not

perhaps many intimate friends. His temperament was cold, or at least its heat was self-contained; he threw out no genial glow to those around him. He was by nature a reserved and shy man, in whose manners shyness took the form of pompousness and coldness. It is certain that he had warm and generous feelings, but his very sensitiveness only led him to disguise them. The contrast between his emotions and his lack of demonstrativeness created in him a constant artificiality which often seemed mere awkwardness. It was in the House of Commons that his real genius and character displayed themselves. Peel was a perfect master of the House of Commons. He was as great an orator as any man could be who addresses himself to the House of Commons, its ways and its purposes alone. Sir Robert Peel had little imagination, and almost none of that passion which in eloquence sometimes supplies its place. His style was clear, strong, and stately; full of various argument and apt illustration drawn from books and from the world of politics and commerce. He followed a difficult argument home to its utter conclusions; and if it had in it any lurking fallacy, he brought out the weakness into the clearest light, often with a happy touch of humour and quiet sarcasm. His speeches might be described as the very perfection of good sense and high principle clothed in the most impressive language. But they were something more peculiar than this, for they were so constructed, in their argument and their style alike, as to touch the very core of the House of Commons. They told of the feelings and the inspiration of Parliament as the ballad-music of a country tells of its scenery and its national sentiments.

Lord Stanley was a far more energetic and impassioned speaker than Sir Robert Peel, and perhaps oc

casionaly, in his later career, came now and then nearer to the height of genuine oratory. But Lord Stanley was little more than a splendid Parliamentary partisan, even when, long after, he was Prime Minister of England. He had very little indeed of that class of information which the modern world requires of its statesmen and leaders. Of political economy, of finance, of the development and the discoveries of modern science, he knew almost as little as it is possible for an able and energetic man to know who lives in the throng of active life and hears what people are talking of around him. He once said good-humouredly of himself, that he was brought up in the pre-scientific period. He had, in fact, what would have been called at an earlier day an elegant scholarship; he had a considerable knowledge of the politics of his time in most European countries, an energetic intrepid spirit, and with him the science of Parliamentary debate seemed to be an instinct. There was no speaker on the ministerial benches at that time who could for a moment be compared with him.

Lord John Russell, who had the leadership of the party in the House of Commons, was really a much stronger man than he seemed to be. He had a character for dauntless courage and confidence among his friends; for boundless self-conceit among his enemies. He had in truth much less genius than his friends and admirers believed, and a great deal more of practical strength than either friends or foes gave him credit for. He became, not indeed an orator, but a very keen debater, who was especially effective in a cold irritating sarcasm which penetrated the weakness of an opponent's argument like some dissolving acid. The thin bright stream of argument worked its way slowly out and contrived to wear a path for itself through obstacles which at first

the looker-on might have felt assured it never could penetrate.

Our English system of government by party makes the history of Parliament seem like that of a succession of great political duels. Two men stand constantly confronted during a series of years, one of whom is at the head of the Government, while the other is at the head of the Opposition. They change places with each victory. The conqueror goes into office; the conquered into opposition. It has often happened that the two leading opponents are men of intellectual and oratorical powers so fairly balanced that their followers may well dispute among themselves as to the superiority of their respective chiefs, and that the public in general may become divided into two schools not merely political but even critical, according to their partiality for one or the other. For many years Lord John Russell and Sir Robert Peel stood thus opposed. Peel had by far the more original mind, and Lord John Russell never obtained so great an influence over the House of Commons as that which his rival long enjoyed. Lord John Russell was a born reformer. He had sat at the feet of Fox. He was cradled in the principles of Liberalism. He held faithfully to his creed; he was one of its boldest and keenest champions. He had great advantages over Peel, in the mere fact that he had begun his education in a more enlightened school. But he wanted passion quite as much as Peel did, and remained still farther than Peel below the level of the genuine orator.

After the chiefs of Ministry and of Opposition, the most conspicuous figure in the House of Commons was the colossal form of O'Connell, the great Irish agitator, of whom we shall hear a good deal more. Among the fore-

most orators of the House at that time was O'Connell's impassioned lieutenant, Richard Lalor Sheil.

A reign which saw in its earliest years the application of the electric current to the task of transmitting messages, the first successful attempts to make use of steam for the business of Transatlantic navigation, the general development of the railway system all over these countries, and the introduction of the penny post, must be considered to have obtained for itself, had it secured no other memorials, an abiding place in history. The history of the past forty or fifty years is almost absolutely distinct from that of any preceding period. In all that part of our social life which is affected by industrial and mechanical appliances we see a complete revolution. A man of the present day suddenly thrust back fifty years in life, would find himself almost as awkwardly unsuited to the ways of that time as if he were sent back to the age when the Romans occupied Britain. He would find himself harassed at every step he took. He could do hardly anything as he does it to-day. Sir Robert Peel travelled from Rome to London to assume office as Prime Minister, exactly as Constantine travelled from York to Rome, to become Emperor. Each traveller had all that sails and horses could do for him, and no more. A few years later Peel might have reached London from Rome in some forty-eight hours.

It is a somewhat curious coincidence, that in the year when Professor Wheatstone and Mr. Cooke took out their first patent "for improvements in giving signals and sounding alarms in distant places by means of electric currents transmitted through metallic circuit," Professor Morse, the American electrician, applied to Congress for aid in the construction and carrying on of a small

electric telegraph to convey messages a short distance, and made the application without success. In the following year he came to this country to obtain a patent for his invention; but he was refused. He had come too late. Our own countrymen were beforehand with him. Very soon after we find experiments made with the electric telegraph between Euston Square and Camden Town. The London and Birmingham Railway was opened through its whole length in 1838. The Liverpool and Preston line was opened in the same year. The Liverpool and Birmingham had been opened in the year before; the London and Croydon was opened the year after. The Act for the transmission of the mails by railways was passed in 1838. In the same year it was noted as an unparalleled, and to many an almost incredible, triumph of human energy and science over time and space, that a locomotive had been able to travel at a speed of thirty-seven miles an hour.

Steam communication was successfully established between England and the United States. The *Sirius*, the *Great Western*, and the *Royal William* accomplished voyages between New York and this country in the early part of 1838. The *Great Western* crossed the ocean from Bristol to New York in fifteen days. She was followed by the *Sirius*, which left Cork for New York, and made the passage in seventeen days. The controversy as to the possibility of such voyages had no reference to the actual safety of such an experiment. During seven years the mails for the Mediterranean had been despatched by means of steamers. Neither the *Sirius* nor the *Great Western* was the first vessel to cross the Atlantic by means of steam propulsion. Nearly twenty years before, a vessel called the *Savannah*, built at New York, crossed the ocean to Liverpool, and a voyage had



been made round the Cape of Good Hope more lately still by a steamship. These expeditions, however, had really little or nothing to do with the problem which was solved by the voyages of the *Sirius* and the *Great Western*. In the former instances the vessel made as much use of her steam propulsion as she could, but she had to rely a good deal on her capacity as a sailer. This was quite a different thing from the enterprise of the *Sirius* and *Great Western*, which was to cross the ocean by steam propulsion only. It is evident that so long as the steam power was to be used only as an auxiliary, it would be impossible to reckon on speed and certainty of arrival. The doubt was whether a steamer could carry, with her cargo and passengers, fuel enough to serve for the whole of her voyage across the Atlantic. The expeditions of the *Sirius* and the *Great Western* settled the whole question. Two years after the *Great Western* went out from Bristol to New York the Cunard line of steamers was established. The steam communication between Liverpool and New York became thenceforth as regular and as unvarying a part of the business of commerce as the journeys of the trains on the Great Western Railway between London and Bristol.

Up to this time the rates of postage were very high, and varied both as to distance and as to the weight and even the size or the shape of a letter. The average postage on every chargeable letter throughout the United Kingdom was sixpence farthing. A letter from London to Brighton cost eightpence; to Aberdeen one shilling and threepence halfpenny; to Belfast one shilling and fourpence. Nor was this all; for if the letter were written on more than one sheet of paper, it came under the operation of a higher scale of charge. Members of Parliament and members of the Government had the privilege

of franking letters. The franking privilege consisted in the right of the privileged person to send his own or any other person's letters through the post free of charge by merely writing his name on the outside. This meant, in plain words, that the letters of the class who could best afford to pay for them went free of charge, and that those who could least afford to pay had to pay double—the expense, that is to say, of carrying their own letters and the letters of the privileged and exempt.

Mr. (afterwards Sir Rowland) Hill is the man to whom this country, and indeed all civilisation, owes the adoption of the cheap and uniform system. His plan has been adopted by every State which professes to have a postal system at all. Mr. Hill belonged to a remarkable family. His father, Thomas Wright Hill, was a teacher, a man of advanced and practical views in popular education, a devoted lover of science, an advocate of civil and religious liberty, and a sort of celebrity in the Birmingham of his day. He had five sons, every one of whom made himself more or less conspicuous as a practical reformer in one path or another. The eldest of the sons was Matthew Davenport Hill, the philanthropic Recorder of Birmingham, who did so much for prison reform and for the reclamation of juvenile offenders. The third son was Rowland Hill, the author of the cheap postal system. Rowland Hill when a little weakly child began to show some such precocious love for arithmetical calculations as Pascal showed for mathematics. His favourite amusement as a child was to lie on the hearthrug and count up figures by the hour together. As he grew up he became teacher of mathematics in his father's school. Afterwards he was appointed secretary to the South Australian Commission, and rendered much valuable service in the organisation of the colony of South Australia. A picturesque and

touching little illustration of the veritable hardships of the existing system seems to have quickened his interest in Postal reform. Miss Martineau thus tells the story:—

“Coleridge, when a young man, was walking through the Lake district, when he one day saw the postman deliver a letter to a woman at a cottage door. The woman turned it over and examined it, and then returned it, saying she could not pay the postage, which was a shilling. Hearing that the letter was from her brother, Coleridge paid the postage in spite of the manifest unwillingness of the woman. . As soon as the postman was out of sight she showed Coleridge how his money had been wasted, as far as she was concerned. The sheet was blank. There was an agreement between her brother and herself that as long as all went well with him he should send a blank sheet in this way once a quarter; and she thus had tidings of him without expense of postage. Most persons would have remembered this incident as a curious story to tell; but there was one mind which awakened up at once to a sense of the significance of the fact. It struck Mr. Rowland Hill that there must be something wrong in a system which drove a brother and sister to cheating, in order to gratify their desire to hear of one another's welfare.”

Mr. Hill gradually worked out for himself a comprehensive scheme of reform. He put it before the world early in 1837. The root of Mr. Hill's system lay in the fact, made evident by him beyond dispute, that the actual cost of the conveyance of letters through the post was very trifling, and was but little increased by the distance over which they had to be carried. His proposal was therefore that the rates of postage should be diminished to a minimum; that at the same time the speed of conveyance should be increased, and that there should be

much greater frequency of despatch. He recommended the uniform charge of one penny the half-ounce, without reference to the distance within the limits of the United Kingdom which the letter had to be carried.

The Post Office authorities were at first uncompromising in their opposition to the scheme. They were convinced that it must involve an unbearable loss of revenue. But the Government took up the scheme with some spirit and liberality. Petitions from all the commercial communities were pouring in to support the plan, and to ask that at least it should have a fair trial. The Government at length determined in 1839 to bring in a bill which should provide for the almost immediate introduction of Mr. Hill's scheme, and for the abolition of the franking system except in the case of official letters actually sent on business directly belonging to her Majesty's service. The bill declared, as an introductory step, that the charge for postage should be at the rate of fourpence for each letter under half an ounce in weight, irrespective of distance, within the limits of the United Kingdom. This, however, was to be only a beginning; for on January 10, 1840, the postage was fixed at the uniform rate of one penny per letter of not more than half an ounce in weight. Some idea of the effect it has produced upon the postal correspondence of the country may be gathered from the fact that in 1839, the last year of the heavy postage, the number of letters delivered in Great Britain and Ireland was eighty-two millions, which included some five millions and a half of franked letters returning nothing to the revenue of the country; whereas, in 1875, more than a thousand millions of letters were delivered in the United Kingdom. The population during the same time had not nearly doubled itself.

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## CHAPTER II.

## SOME TROUBLES TO THE NEW REIGN.

THE new Queen's reign opened amid many grim and unpromising conditions of our social affairs. The winter of 1837-8 was one of unusual severity and distress. There would have been much discontent and grumbling in any case among the working class, but the complaints were aggravated by a common belief that the young Queen was wholly under the influence of a frivolous and selfish minister, who occupied her with amusements while the poor were starving. It does not appear that there was at any time the slightest justification for such a belief; but it prevailed among the working classes and the poor very generally, and added to the sufferings of genuine want the bitterness of imaginary wrong.

Only a few weeks after the coronation of the Queen a great Radical meeting was held in Birmingham. A manifesto was adopted there which afterwards came to be known as the 'Chartist petition. With that moment Chartism began to be one of the most disturbing influences of the political life of the country. For ten years it agitated England. It might have been a very serious danger if the State had been involved in any external difficulties. It was backed by much genuine enthusiasm, passion and intelligence. It appealed strongly and naturally to whatever there was of discontent among the working classes. Its fierce and fitful flame went out at last under the influence of the clear, strong and steady light of political reform and education. The one great lesson it teaches is, that political agitation lives and is formidable only by virtue of what is reasonable in its demands. Thousands of ignorant and miserable men all over the

country joined the Chartist agitation who cared nothing about the substantial value of its political claims. They were poor, they were overworked, they were badly paid, their lives were altogether wretched. They got into their heads some wild idea that the People's Charter would give them better food and wages and lighter work if it were obtained, and that for that very reason the aristocrats and the officials would not grant it.

The Reform Bill of 1832 had done great things for the constitutional system of England. It abolished fifty-six nomination or rotten boroughs, and took away half the representation from thirty others; it disposed of the seats thus obtained by giving sixty-five additional representatives to the counties, and, conferred the right of returning members on Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, and some thirty-nine large and prosperous towns which had previously had no representation. The bill introduced a 10% household qualification for boroughs, and extended the county franchise to leaseholders and copyholders. But it left the working classes almost altogether out of the franchise. It broke down the monopoly which the aristocracy and landed classes had enjoyed, and admitted the middle classes to a share of the law-making power, but the working class, in the opinion of many of their ablest and most influential representatives, were not merely left out, but shouldered out. This was all the more exasperating, because the excitement and agitation by the strength of which the Reform Bill was carried in the teeth of so much resistance were kept up by the working men. Rightly or wrongly they believed that their strength had been kept in reserve to secure the carrying of the Reform Bill, and that when it was carried they were immediately thrown over by those whom they had thus helped to pass it. Therefore at the time when

the young Sovereign ascended the throne, the working classes in all the large towns were in a state of profound disappointment and discontent, almost indeed of disaffection. Chartism was beginning to succeed to the Reform agitation.

Chartism may be said to have sprung definitively into existence in consequence of the formal declarations of the leaders of the Liberal party in Parliament that they did not intend to push Reform any farther. At the opening of the first Parliament of Queen Victoria's reign the question was brought to a test. A Radical member of the House of Commons moved as an amendment to the address a resolution declaring in favour of the ballot and of shorter duration of Parliaments. Only twenty members voted for it; and Lord John Russell declared that to push Reform any farther then would be a breach of faith towards those who helped him to carry it. A great many outside Parliament not unnaturally regarded the refusal to go any farther as a breach of faith towards them on the part of the Liberal leaders. A conference was held almost immediately between a few of the Liberal members of Parliament who professed Radical opinions and some of the leaders of the working men. At this conference the programme, or what was afterwards known as "the Charter," was agreed upon and drawn up. The name of Charter was given by Mr. O'Connell.

Quietly studied now, the People's Charter does not seem a very formidable document. Its "points," as they were called, were six. Manhood Suffrage came first. The second was Annual Parliaments. Vote by Ballot was the third. Abolition of the Property Qualification (then and for many years after required for the election of a member to Parliament) was the fourth. The Pay-

ment of Members was the fifth; and the Division of the Country into Equal Electoral Districts, the sixth of the famous points. Three of the points—half, that is to say, of the whole number—have already been made part of our constitutional system. The existing franchise may be virtually regarded as manhood suffrage. We have for years been voting by means of a written paper dropped in a ballot-box. The property qualification for members of Parliament could hardly be said to have been abolished. Such a word seems far too grand and dignified to describe the fate that befell it. We should rather say that it was extinguished by its own absurdity and viciousness. The proposal to divide the country into equal electoral districts is one which can hardly yet be regarded as having come to any test. But it is almost certain that sooner or later some alteration of our present system in that direction will be adopted. Of the two other points of the Charter, the payment of members may be regarded as decidedly objectionable; and that for yearly Parliaments as embodying a proposition which would make public life an almost insufferable nuisance to those actively concerned in it.

The Chartists might be roughly divided into three classes—the political Chartists, the social Chartists, and the Chartists of vague discontent who joined the movement because they were wretched and felt angry. The first were the regular political agitators who wanted a wider popular representation; the second were chiefly led to the movement by their hatred of the “bread-tax.” These two classes were perfectly clear as to what they wanted: some of their demands were just and reasonable; none of them were without the sphere of rational and peaceful controversy. The disciples of mere discontent naturally swerved alternately to the side of those leaders



or sections who talked loudest and fiercest against the lawmakers and the constituted authorities. Chartism soon split itself into two general divisions—the moral force and the physical force Chartistism. A whole literature of Chartist newspapers sprang up to advocate the cause. The *Northern Star* was the most popular and influential of them; but every great town had its Chartist press. Meetings were held at which sometimes the most violent language was employed. It began to be the practice to hold torchlight meetings at night, and many men went armed to these, and open clamour was made by the wilder of the Chartists for an appeal to arms. A formidable riot took place in Birmingham, where the authorities endeavoured to put down a Chartist meeting. The Government began to prosecute some of the orators and leaders of the Charter movement; and some of these were convicted, imprisoned, and treated with great severity.

Wide and almost universal discontent among the working classes in town and country still helped to swell the Chartist ranks. The weavers and stockingers in some of the manufacturing towns were miserably poor. Wages were low everywhere. In the agricultural districts the complaints against the operation of the new Poor Law were vehement and passionate; and although they were unjust in principle and sustained by monstrous exaggerations of statement, they were not the less potent as recruiting agents for Chartism. There was a profound distrust of the middle class and their leaders. It is clear that at that time the Chartists, who represented the bulk of the artisan class in most of the large towns, did in their very hearts believe that England was ruled for the benefit of aristocrats and millionaires who were absolutely indifferent to the sufferings of the poor. It is

equally clear that most of what are called the ruling class did really believe the English working men who joined the Chartist movement to be a race of fierce, unmanageable and selfish communists who, if they were allowed their own way for a moment, would prove themselves determined to overthrow throne, altar, and all established securities of society. An ignorant panic prevailed on both sides.

The first foreign disturbance to the quiet and good promise of the new reign came from Canada. The condition of Canada was very peculiar. By an Act called the Constitution of 1791, Canada was divided into two provinces, the Upper and the Lower. Each province had a separate system of government, consisting of a governor, an executive council appointed by the Crown, and supposed in some way to resemble the Privy Council of this country; a legislative council, the members of which were appointed by the Crown for life; and a Representative Assembly, the members of which were elected for four years. At the same time the clergy reserves were established by Parliament. One-seventh of the waste lands of the colony was set aside for the maintenance of the Protestant clergy, a fruitful source of disturbance and ill-feeling. Lower or Eastern Canada was inhabited for the most part by men of French descent, who still kept up in the midst of an active and moving civilisation most of the principles and usages which belonged to mediæval France. Lower Canada would have dozed away in its sleepy picturesqueness, held fast to its ancient ways, and allowed a bustling giddy world, all alive with commerce and ambition, and desire for novelty and the terribly disturbing thing which unresting people called progress, to rush on its wild path unheeded. But in the large towns there were active traders from Eng.

land and other countries, who were by no means content to put up with old-world ways, and to let the magnificent resources of the place run to waste. Upper Canada, on the other hand, was all new as to its population, and was full of the modern desire for commercial activity. Upper Canada was peopled almost exclusively by inhabitants from great Britain.

It is easy to see on the very face of things some of the difficulties which must arise in the development of such a system. The French of Lower Canada would regard with almost morbid jealousy any legislation which appeared likely to interfere with their ancient ways and to give any advantage or favour to the populations of British descent. The latter would see injustice or feebleness in every measure which did not assist them in developing their more energetic ideas.

It was in Lower Canada that the greatest difficulties arose. A constant antagonism grew up between the majority of the Representative Assembly, who were elected by the population of the province. At last the Representative Assembly refused to vote any further supplies or to carry on any further business. They formulated their grievances against the Home Government. Their complaints were of arbitrary conduct on the part of the governors; intolerable composition of the legislative council, which they insisted ought to be elective; illegal appropriation of the public money; and violent prorogation of the provincial Parliament.

One of the leading men in the movement was Mr. Louis Joseph Papineau. This man had risen to high position by his talents, his energy, and his undoubtedly honourable character. He had represented Montreal in the Representative Assembly of Lower Canada, and he afterwards became Speaker of the House. He made

himself leader of the movement to protest against the policy of the governors, and that of the Government at home by whom they were sustained. He held a series of meetings, at some of which undoubtedly rather strong language was used, and too frequent and significant appeals were made to the example held out to the population of Lower Canada by the successful revolt of the United States. Mr. Papineau also planned the calling together of a great convention to discuss and proclaim the grievances of the colonies. Lord Gosford, the governor, began by dismissing several militia officers who had taken part in some of these demonstrations; Mr. Papineau himself was an officer of this force. Then the governor issued warrants for the apprehension of many members of the popular Assembly on the charge of high treason. Some of these at once left the country; others against whom warrants were issued were arrested, and a sudden resistance was made by their friends and supporters. Then, in the manner familiar to all who have read anything of the history of revolutionary movements, the resistance to a capture of prisoners suddenly transformed itself into open rebellion.

The rebellion was not in a military sense a very great thing. At its first outbreak the military authorities were for a moment surprised, and the rebels obtained one or two trifling advantages. But the commander-in-chief at once showed energy adequate to the occasion, and used, as it was his duty to do, a strong hand in putting the movement down. The rebels fought with something like desperation in one or two instances, and there was, it must be said, a good deal of blood shed. The disturbance, however, after a while extended to the upper province. Upper Canada too had its complaints against its governors and the Home Government.

The news of the outbreaks in Canada created a natural excitement in this country. There was a very strong feeling of sympathy among many classes here—not, indeed, with the rebellion, but with the colony which complained of what seemed to be genuine and serious grievances. Public meetings were held at which resolutions were passed ascribing the disturbances in the first place to the refusal by the Government of any redress sought for by the colonists. Lord John Russell on the part of the Government introduced a bill to deal with the rebellious province. The bill proposed in brief to suspend for a time the constitution of Lower Canada, and to send out from this country a governor-general and high commissioner, with full powers to deal with the rebellion, and to remodel the constitution of both provinces. There was an almost universal admission that the Government had found the right man when Lord John Russell mentioned the name of Lord Durham.

Lord Durham was a man of remarkable character. He belonged to one of the oldest families in England. The Lambtons had lived on their estate in the north, in uninterrupted succession, since the Conquest. The male succession, it is stated, never was interrupted since the twelfth century. They were not, however, a family of aristocrats. Their wealth was derived chiefly from coal-mines, and grew up in later days; the property at first, and for a long time, was of inconsiderable value. Lord Durham was born at Lambton Castle in April 1792. Before he was quite twenty years of age, he made a romantic marriage at Gretna Green with a lady who died three years after. About a year after the death of his first wife, he married the eldest daughter of Lord Grey. He was then only twenty-four years of age. He had before this been returned to Parliament for the

county of Durham, and he soon distinguished himself as a very advanced and energetic reformer. While in the Commons he seldom addressed the House, but when he did speak, it was in support of some measure of reform, or against what he conceived to be antiquated and illiberal legislation. He brought out a plan of his own for Parliamentary reform in 1821. In 1828 he was raised to the peerage with the title of Baron Durham. When the Ministry of Lord Grey was formed, in November 1830, Lord Durham became Lord Privy Seal. He is said to have had an almost complete control over Lord Grey. He had an impassioned and energetic nature, which sometimes drove him into outbreaks of feeling which most of his colleagues dreaded. He was thorough in his reforming purposes, and would have rushed at radical changes with scanty consideration for the time or for the temper of his opponents. He had very little reverence indeed for the majesty of custom. Whatever he wished he strongly wished. He had no idea of reticence, and cared not much for the decorum of office. He was one of the men who, even when they are thoroughly in the right, have often the unhappy art of seeming to put themselves completely in the wrong. None of his opponents, however, denied his great ability. He was never deterred by conventional beliefs and habits from looking boldly into the very heart of a great political difficulty. He was never afraid to propose what in times later than his have been called heroic remedies. There was a general impression, perhaps even among those who liked him least, that he was a sort of "unemployed Cæsar," a man who only required a field large enough to develop great qualities in the ruling of men. The difficulties in Canada seemed to have come as if expressly to give him an opportunity of proving himself

all that his friends declared him to be, or of justifying for ever the distrust of his enemies. He went out to Canada with the assurance of everyone that his expedition would either make or mar a career, if not a country. Lord Durham found out a new alternative. He made a country and he marred a career. The mission of Lord Durham saved Canada. It ruined Lord Durham.

Lord Durham arrived in Quebec at the end of May, 1838. He at once issued a proclamation, in style like that of a dictator. It was not in any way unworthy of the occasion, which especially called for the intervention of a brave and enlightened dictatorship. He declared that he would unsparingly punish any who violated the laws, but he frankly invited the co-operation of the colonies to form a new system of government really suited to their wants and to the altering conditions of civilisation. Unfortunately he had hardly entered on his work of dictatorship when he found that he was no longer a dictator. In the passing of the Canada Bill through Parliament the powers which he understood were to be conferred upon him had been considerably reduced. Lord Durham went to work, however, as if he were still invested with absolute authority over all the laws and conditions of the colony. A very Cæsar laying down the lines for the future government of a province could hardly have been more boldly arbitrary. Let it be said also that Lord Durham's arbitrariness was for the most part healthy in effect and just in spirit. But it gave an immense opportunity of attack on himself and on the Government to the enemies of both at home. Lord Durham had hardly begun his work of reconstruction when his recall was clamoured for by vehement voices in Parliament.

Lord Durham did not wait for the formal recall. He

returned to England a disgraced man. Yet even then there was public spirit enough among the English people to refuse to ratify any sentence of disgrace upon him. When he landed at Plymouth, he was received with acclamations by the population, although the Government had prevented any of the official honour usually shown to returning governors from being offered to him.

Lord Durham's report was acknowledged by enemies as well as by the most impartial critics to be a masterly document. It laid the foundation of the political success and social prosperity not only of Canada but of all the other important colonies. After having explained in the most exhaustive manner the causes of discontent and backwardness in Canada, it went on to recommend that the government of the colony should be put as much as possible into the hands of the colonists themselves, that they themselves should execute as well as make the laws, the limit of the Imperial Government's interference being in such matters as affect the relations of the colony with the mother country, such as the constitution and form of government, the regulation of foreign relations and trade, and the disposal of the public lands. Lord Durham proposed to establish a thoroughly good system of municipal institutions; to secure the independence of the judges; to make all provincial officers, except the governor and his secretary, responsible to the Colonial Legislature; and to repeal all former legislation with respect to the reserves of land for the clergy. Finally, he proposed that the provinces of Canada should be reunited politically and should become one legislature, containing the representatives of both races and of all districts. It is significant that the report also recommended that in any Act to be introduced for this purpose, a provision should be made by which all or any



of the other North American colonies should on the application of their legislatures and with the consent of Canada be admitted into the Canadian Union. In brief, Lord Durham proposed to make the Canadas self-governing as regards their internal affairs, and the germ of a federal union.

It is not necessary to describe in detail the steps by which the Government gradually introduced the recommendations of Lord Durham to Parliament and carried them to success. In 1840, however, the Act was passed which reunited Upper and Lower Canada on the basis proposed by Lord Durham. Lord Durham did not live to see the success of the policy he had recommended. Within a few days after the passing of the Canada Government Bill he died at Cowes, in the Isle of Wight, on July 28, 1840. He was then little more than forty-eight years of age. He had for some time been in failing health, and it cannot be doubted that the mortification attending his Canadian mission had worn away his strength. His proud and sensitive spirit could ill bear the contradictions and humiliations that had been forced upon him. He wanted to the success of his political career that proud patience which the gods are said to love, and by virtue of which great men live down misappreciation, and hold out until they see themselves justified and hear the reproaches turn into cheers. But if Lord Durham's personal career was in any way a failure, his policy for the Canadas was a splendid success. It established the principles of colonial government. There were defects in the construction of Lord Durham's scheme, but the success of his policy lay in the broad principles it laid down, and to which other colonial systems as well as that of the Dominion of Canada owe their strength and security to-day. One may say, with little help from

the merely fanciful, that the rejoicings of emancipated colonies might have been in his dying ears as he sank into his early grave.

The Opium dispute with China was going on when the Queen came to the throne. The Opium War broke out soon after. Reduced to plain words, the principle for which we fought in the China War was the right of Great Britain to force a peculiar trade upon a foreign people in spite of the protestations of the Government and all such public opinion as there was of the nation.

The whole principle of Chinese civilisation, at the time when the Opium War broke out, was based on conditions which to any modern nation must seem erroneous and unreasonable. The Chinese Governments and people desired to have no political relations or dealings whatever with any other State. They were not so obstinately set against private and commercial dealings; but they would have no political intercourse with foreigners, and they would not even recognise the existence of foreign peoples as States. They were perfectly satisfied with themselves and their own systems. The one thing which China asked of European civilisation and the movement called Modern Progress was to be let alone. The Chinese would much rather have lived without ever seeing the face of a foreigner. But they had put up with the private intrusion of foreigners and trade, and had had dealings with American traders and with the East India Company. The charter and the exclusive rights of the East India Company expired in April 1834; the charter was renewed under different conditions, and the trade with China was thrown open. One of the great branches of the East India Company's business with China was the opium trade. When the trading privileges ceased this traffic was taken up briskly by private merchants, who bought

of the Company the opium which they grew in India and sold it to the Chinese. The Chinese Governments, and all teachers, moralists, and persons of education in China, had long desired to get rid of or put down this trade in opium. They considered it highly detrimental to the morals, the health, and the prosperity of the people. All traffic in opium was strictly forbidden by the Governments and laws of China. Yet our English traders carried on a brisk and profitable trade in the forbidden article. Nor was this merely an ordinary smuggling, or a business akin to that of the blockade running during the American civil war. The arrangements with the Chinese Government allowed the existence of all establishments and machinery for carrying on a general trade at Canton and Macao; and under cover of these arrangements the opium traders set up their regular head-quarters in these towns.

The English Government appointed superintendents to manage our commercial dealings with China. Misunderstandings occurred at every new step of negotiation. These misunderstandings were natural. Our people knew hardly anything about the Chinese. The limitation of our means of communication with them made this ignorance inevitable, but certainly did not excuse our acting as if we were in possession of the fullest and most accurate information.

The Chinese believed from the first that the superintendents were there merely to protect the opium trade; and to force on China political relations with the West. Practically this was the effect of their presence. The superintendents took no steps to aid the Chinese authorities in stopping the hated trade. The British traders naturally enough thought that the British Government were determined to protect them in carrying it on. At length the

English Government announced that "her Majesty's Government could not interfere for the purpose of enabling British subjects to violate the laws of the country with which they trade;" and that "any loss therefore which such persons may suffer in consequence of the more effectual execution of the Chinese laws on this subject must be borne by the parties who have brought that loss on themselves by their own acts." This very wise and proper resolve came, however, too late. The British traders had been allowed to go on for a long time under the full conviction that the protection of the English Government was behind them and wholly at their service.

When the Chinese authorities actually proceeded to insist on the forfeiture of an immense quantity of opium in the hand of British traders, and took other harsh, but certainly not unnatural measures to extinguish the traffic, Captain Elliott, the chief superintendent, sent to the Governor of India a request for as many ships of war as could be spared for the protection of the life and property of Englishmen in China. Before long British ships arrived; and the two countries were at war.

It was easy work enough so far as England was concerned. It was on our side nothing but a succession of cheap victories. The Chinese fought very bravely in a great many instances; and they showed still more often a Spartan-like resolve not to survive defeat. When one of the Chinese cities was taken by Sir Hugh Gough, the Tartar general went into his house as soon as he saw that all was lost, made his servants set fire to the building, and calmly sat in his chair until he was burned to death. We quickly captured the island of Chusan, on the east coast of China; a part of our squadron went up the Peiho river to threaten the capital; negotiations were

opened, and the preliminaries of a treaty were made out, to which, however, neither the English Government nor the Chinese would agree, and the war was reopened. Chusan was again taken by us; Ningpo, a large city a few miles in on the mainland, fell into our hands; Amoy, farther south, was captured; our troops were before Nankin, when the Chinese Government at last saw how futile was the idea of resisting our arms. They made peace at last on any terms we chose to ask. We asked in the first instance the cession in perpetuity to us of the island of Hong-Kong. Of course we got it. Then we asked that five ports, Canton, Amoy, Foo-Chow-Foo, Ningpo, and Shanghai should be thrown open to British traders, and that consuls should be established there. Needless to say that this too was conceded. Then it was agreed that the indemnity already mentioned should be paid by the Chinese Government—some four millions and a half sterling, in addition to one million and a quarter as compensation for the destroyed opium. The Chinese war then was over for the time. But as the children say that snow brings more snow, so did that war with China bring other wars to follow it.

The Melbourne Ministry kept going from bad to worse. There was a great stirring in the country all around them, which made their feebleness the more conspicuous. Indeed the history of that time seems full of Reform projects. The Parliamentary annals contain the names of various measures of social and political improvement which might in themselves, it would seem, bear witness to the most unsleeping activity on the part of any Ministry. The appointment of the Committee of Council to deal with the elementary education of the poor; measures for general registration; for the reduction of the stamp duty on newspapers, and of the duty on

paper; for the improvement of the gaol system; for the spread of vaccination; for the regulation of the labour of children; for the prohibition of the employment of any child or young person under twenty-one in the cleaning of chimneys by climbing; for the suppression of the punishment of the pillory; efforts to relieve the Jews from civil disabilities—these are but a few of the many projects of social and political reform that occupied the attention of that busy period which somehow appears nevertheless to have been so sleepy and do-nothing. How does it come about that we can regard the Ministry in whose time all these things were done or attempted as exhausted and worthless?

One answer is plain. The reforming energy was in the time, and not in the Ministry. There was a just and general conviction that if the Government were left to themselves they would do nothing. Whatever they undertook they seemed to undertake reluctantly, and as if only with the object of preventing other people from having anything to do with it. Naturally, therefore, they got little or no thanks for any good they might have done. When they brought in a measure to abolish in various cases the punishment of death, they fell so far behind public opinion and the inclinations of the Commission that had for eight years been inquiring into the state of our criminal law, that their bill only passed by very narrow majorities, and impressed many ardent reformers as if it were meant rather to withhold than to advance a genuine reform. In truth it was a period of enthusiasm and of growth, and the Ministry did not understand this. Lord Melbourne had apparently got into his mind the conviction that the only sensible thing the people of England could do was to keep up the Melbourne Ministry, and that being a sensible people they

would naturally do this. He had grown into something like the condition of a pampered old hall porter, who, dozing in his chair, begins to look on it as an act of rudeness if any visitor to his master presumes to knock at the door and so disturb him from his comfortable rest.

The operations which took place about this time in Syria had an important bearing on the relations between this country and France. Mohammed Ali, Pasha of Egypt, the most powerful of all the Sultan's feudatories, had made himself for a time master of Syria. By the aid of his adopted son, Ibrahim Pasha, he had defeated the armies of the Porte wherever he had encountered them. Mohammed's victories had for the time compelled the Porte to allow him to remain in power in Syria; but in 1839 the Sultan again declared war against Mohammed Ali. Ibrahim Pasha again obtained an overwhelming victory over the Turkish army. The energetic Sultan Mahmoud died suddenly; and immediately after his death the Capitan Pasha, or Lord High Admiral of the Ottoman fleet, went over to the Egyptians with all his vessels; an act of almost unexampled treachery even in the history of the Ottoman Empire. It was evident that Turkey was not able to hold her own against the formidable Mohammed and his successful son; and the policy of the Western Powers of Europe, and of England especially, had long been to maintain the Ottoman Empire as a necessary part of the common State system. The policy of Russia was to keep up that empire as long as it suited her own purposes; to take care that no other Power got anything out of Turkey; and to prepare the way for such a partition of the spoils of Turkey as would satisfy Russian interests. Russia therefore was to be found now defending Turkey, and now assailing her. The

course taken by Russia was seemingly inconsistent; but it was only inconsistent as the course of a sailing ship may be which now tacks to this side and now to that, but has a clear object in view and a port to reach all the while. England was then and for a long time after steadily bent on preserving the Turkish Empire, and in a great measure as a rampart against the schemes and ambitions imputed to Russia herself. France was less firmly set on the maintenance of Turkey; and France, moreover, had got into her mind that England had designs of her own on Egypt. Austria was disposed to go generally with England; Prussia was little more than a nominal sharer in the alliance that was now patched up. It is evident that such an alliance could not be very harmonious or direct in its action. It was, however, effective enough to prove too strong for the Pasha of Egypt. A fleet made up of English, Austrian and Turkish vessels bombarded Acre; an allied army drove the Egyptians from several of their strongholds. Ibrahim Pasha, with all his courage and genius, was not equal to the odds against which he now saw himself forced to contend. He had to succumb. Mohammed Ali was deprived of all his Asiatic possessions; but was secured in his government of Egypt by a convention signed at London on July 15, 1840, by the representatives of Great Britain, Austria, Prussia and Russia, on the one part, and of the Ottoman Porte on the other. The name of France was not found there. France had drawn back from the alliance, and for some time seemed as if she were likely to take arms against it. M. Thiers was then her Prime Minister: he was a man of quick fancy, restless and ambitious temperament. Thiers persuaded himself and the great majority of his countrymen that England was bent upon driving Mohammed Ali out of Egypt as well



as out of Syria; and that her object was to obtain possession of Egypt for herself. For some months it seemed as if war were inevitable between England and France. Fortunately, the French King, Louis Philippe and the eminent statesman, M. Guizot, were both strongly in favour of peace; M. Thiers resigned; M. Guizot became Minister for Foreign Affairs, and virtually head of the Government, and on July 13, 1841, the Treaty of London was signed, which provided for the settlement of the affairs of Egypt on the basis of the arrangement already made, and which contained moreover a stipulation, by which the Sultan declared himself firmly resolved to maintain the ancient principle of his empire—that no foreign ship of war was to be admitted into the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, with the exception of light vessels for which a firman was granted.

Steadily meanwhile did the Ministry go from bad to worse. They were remarkably bad administrators; their finances were wretchedly managed. The budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Baring, showed a deficiency of nearly two millions. This deficiency he proposed to meet in part by alteration in the sugar duties; but the House of Commons, after a long debate, rejected his proposals by a majority of thirty-six. It was then expected, of course, that ministers would resign; but they were not yet willing to accept the consequences of defeat. People began to ask, "Will nothing then turn them out of office? Will they never have done with trying new tricks to keep in place?"

Sir Robert Peel took, in homely phrase, the bull by the horns. He proposed a direct vote of want of confidence—a resolution declaring that ministers did not possess the confidence of the house sufficiently to enable them to carry through the measures, which they deemed

of essential importance to the public welfare, and that their continuance in office under such circumstances was at variance with the spirit of the constitution. On June 4, 1841, the division was taken; and the vote of no-confidence was carried by a majority of one. Even the Whigs could not stand this: Parliament was dissolved, and the result of the general election was that the Tories were found to have a majority even greater than they themselves had anticipated. The moment the new Parliament was assembled amendments to the address were carried in both Houses in a sense hostile to the Government. Lord Melbourne and his colleagues had to resign, and Sir Robert Peel was entrusted with the task of forming an administration.

We have no more to do with Lord Melbourne in this history. He merely drops out of it. Between his expulsion from office and his death, which took place in 1848, he did little or nothing to call for the notice of anyone. It was said at one time that his closing years were lonesome and melancholy; but this has lately been denied, and indeed it is not likely that one who had such a genial temper and so many friends could have been left to the dreariness of a not self-sufficing solitude and to the bitterness of neglect. He was a generous and kindly man; his personal character, although often assailed, was free of any serious reproach; he was a failure in office, not so much from want of ability, as because he was a politician without convictions.

The Peel Ministry came into power with great hopes. It had Lord Lyndhurst for Lord Chancellor; Sir James Graham for Home Secretary; Lord Aberdeen at the Foreign Office; Lord Stanley was Colonial Secretary. The most remarkable man not in the Cabinet, soon to be one of the foremost statesmen in the country, was

Mr. W. E. Gladstone. It is a fact of some significance in the history of the Peel administration, that the elections which brought the new Ministry into power brought Mr. Cobden for the first time into the House of Commons.

While Lord Melbourne and his Whig colleagues, still in office, were frittering away their popularity on the pleasant assumption that nobody was particularly in earnest about anything, the Vice-Chancellor and heads of houses held a meeting at Oxford, and passed a censure on the celebrated "Nr. 90" of "Tracts for the Times." The author of the tract was Dr. John Henry Newman, and the principal ground for its censure by voices claiming authority was the principle it seemed to put forward—that a man might honestly subscribe all the articles and formularies of the English Church, while yet holding many of the doctrine of the Church of Rome, against which those articles were regarded as a necessary protest. The great movement which was thus brought into sudden question and publicity sprang from the desire to revive the authority of the Church; to quicken her with a new vitality; to give her once again that place as guide and inspirer of the national life which her ardent votaries believed to be hers by right, and to have been forfeited only by the carelessness of her authorities and their failure to fulfil the duties of her Heaven-assigned mission.

No movement could have had a purer source. None could have had more disinterested and high-minded promoters. It was borne in upon some earnest unresting souls, like that of the sweet and saintly Keble, that the Church of England had higher duties and nobler claims than the business of preaching harmless sermons and the power of enriching bishops. Keble urged on some of

the more vigorous and thoughtful minds around him by his influence and his example, that they should reclaim for the Church the place which ought to be hers, as the true successor of the Apostles. Among those who shared the spirit and purpose of Keble were Richard Hurrell Froude, the historian's elder brother, who gave rich promise of a splendid career, but who died while still in comparative youth; Dr. Pusey, afterwards leader of the school of ecclesiasticism which bears his name; and, most eminent of all, Dr. Newman. Newman had started the publication of a series of treatises called "Tracts for the Times," to vindicate the real mission of the Church of England, and wrote the most remarkable of them. This was the Tractarian movement, which had such various and memorable results. Newman had up to this time been distinguished as one of the most unsparing enemies of Rome. He had never had any manner of association with Roman Catholics; had in fact known singularly little of them. At this time the idea of leaving the Church never, Dr. Newman himself assures us, had crossed his imagination.

The abilities of Dr. Newman were hardly surpassed by any contemporary in any department of thought. His position and influence in Oxford were almost unique. There was in his intellectual temperament a curious combination of the mystic and the logical. England in our time has hardly had a greater master of argument and of English prose than Newman. He is one of the keenest of dialecticians. His words dispel mists; and whether they who listen agree or not, they cannot fail to understand. A penetrating poignant satirical humour is found in most of his writings; an irony sometimes piercing suddenly through it like a darting pain. On the other hand a generous vein of poetry and of pathos

informs his style; and there are many passages of his works in which he rises to the height of a genuine and noble eloquence.

In all the arts that make a great preacher or orator, Newman was strikingly deficient. His manner was constrained, ungraceful and even awkward; his voice was thin and weak. His bearing was not at first impressive in any way. A gaunt, emaciated figure, a sharp and eagle face, a cold meditative eye rather repelled than attracted those who saw him for the first time. Singularly devoid of affectation, Newman did not always conceal his intellectual scorn of men who made loud pretence with inferior gifts, and the men must have been few indeed whose gifts were not inferior to his. Newman had no scorn for intellectual inferiority in itself; he despised it only when it gave itself airs. His influence while he was the vicar of St. Mary's at Oxford was profound. No opponent ever spoke of Newman but with admiration for his intellect and respect for his character. Dr. Newman had a younger brother, Francis W. Newman, who also possessed remarkable ability and earnestness. He too was distinguished at Oxford, and seemed to have a great career there before him. But he was drawn one way by the wave of thought before his more famous brother had been drawn the other way. In 1830, the younger Newman found himself prevented by religious scruples from subscribing the Thirty-nine Articles for his master's degree. He left the university, and wandered for years in the East, endeavouring, not very successfully perhaps, to teach Christianity on its broadest base to Mahometans; and then he came back to England to take his place among the leaders of a certain school of free thought.

When Dr. Newman wrote the famous Tract "No. 90,"

for which he was censured, he bowed to the authority of his bishop. But he did not admit any change of opinion; and indeed soon after the gradual working of Newman's mind became evident to all the world. The brightest and most penetrating intellect in the Church of England was withdrawn from her service, and Newman went over to the church of Rome. To this result had the inquiry conducted him which had led his friend Dr. Pusey merely to endeavour to incorporate some of the mysticism and the symbols of Rome with the ritual of the English Protestant Church; which had brought Keble only to seek a more liberal and truly Christian temper for the faith of the Protestant; and which had sent Francis Newman into Radicalism and Rationalism.

Still greater was the practical importance, at least in defined results, of the movement which went on in Scotland about the same time.

The case was briefly this. During the reign of Queen Anne an Act was passed which took from the Church courts in Scotland the free choice as to the appointment of pastors by subjecting the power of the presbytery to the control and interference of the law courts. In an immense number of Scotch parishes the minister was nominated by a lay patron; and if the presbytery found nothing to condemn in him as to "life, literature and doctrine," they were compelled to appoint him, however unwelcome he might be to the parishioners. Now it is obvious that a man might have a blameless character, sound religious views, and an excellent education, and nevertheless be totally unfitted to undertake the charge of a Scottish parish. The effect of the power conferred on the law courts and the patron was simply in a great number of cases to send families away from the Church of Scotland and into voluntaryism.

Dr. Chalmers became the leader of the movement which was destined within two years from the time we are now surveying to cause the disruption of the ancient Kirk of Scotland. No man could be better fitted for the task of leadership in such a movement. He was beyond comparison the foremost man in the Scottish Church. He was the greatest pulpit orator in Scotland, or, indeed, in Great Britain. As a writer on political economy he had made a distinct mark. From having been in his earlier days the minister of an obscure Scottish village congregation, he had suddenly sprung into fame. He was the lion of any city which he happened to visit. If he preached in London, the church was crowded with the leaders of politics, science and fashion, eager to hear him. Chalmers spoke with a massive eloquence in keeping with his powerful frame and his broad brow and his commanding presence. His speeches were a strenuous blending of argument and emotion. They appealed at once to the strong common sense and to the deep religious convictions of his Scottish audiences. His whole soul was in his work as a leader of religious movements. He cared little or nothing for any popularity or fame that he might have won. The Free Church of Scotland is his monument. He did not make that Church. It was not the work of one man, or, strictly speaking of one generation. It grew naturally out of the inevitable struggle between Church and State. But Chalmers did more than any other man to decide the moment and the manner of its coming into existence, and its success is its best monument.

On May 18, 1843, some five hundred ministers of the Church of Scotland, under the leadership of Dr. Chalmers, seceded from the old Kirk and set about to form the Free Church. The Government of Sir Robert

Peel had made a weak effort at compromise by legislative enactment, but had declined to introduce any legislation which should free the Kirk of Scotland from the control of the civil courts, and there was no course for those who held the views of Dr. Chalmers but to withdraw from the Church which admitted that claim of State control. The history of Scotland is illustrated by many great national deeds. No deed it tells of surpasses in dignity and in moral grandeur that secession—to cite the words of the protest—"from an Establishment which we loved and prized, through interference with conscience, the dishonour done to Christ's crown, and the rejection of his sole and supreme authority as King in his Church."

### CHAPTER III.

#### DECLINE AND FALL OF THE MELBOURNE MINISTRY.

MEANWHILE things were looking ill with the Melbourne Ministry. The Jamaica Bill put them in great perplexity. This was a measure brought in on April 9, 1839, to make temporary provision for the government of the island of Jamaica, by setting aside the House of Assembly for five years, and during that time empowering the governor and council with three salaried commissioners to manage the affairs of the colony. In other words, the Melbourne Ministry proposed to suspend for five years the constitution of Jamaica. No body of persons can be more awkwardly placed than a Whig Ministry proposing to set aside a constitutional government anywhere. Such a proposal may be a necessary measure; it may be unavoidable; but it always comes with a bad grace from Whigs or Liberals, and gives their enemies a



handle against them which they cannot fail to use to some purpose.

In the case of the Jamaica Bill there was some excuse for the harsh policy. After the abolition of slavery, the former masters in the island found it very hard to reconcile themselves to the new condition of things. They could not all at once understand that their former slaves were to be their equals before the law. On the other hand, some of the Jamaica negroes were too ignorant to understand that they had acquired any rights; others were a little too clamorous in their assertion. The Imperial governors and officials were generally and justly eager to protect the negroes; and the result was a constant quarrel between the Jamaica House of Assembly and the representatives of the Home Government. A bill, very necessary in itself, was passed by the Imperial Parliament for the better regulation of prisons in Jamaica, and the House of Assembly refused to submit to any such legislation. Under these circumstances the Melbourne Ministry proposed the suspension of the constitution of the island. The measure was opposed not only by Peel and the Conservatives, but by many Radicals. The Ministry only had a majority of five in favour of their measure. This, of course, was a virtual defeat. The Ministry acknowledged it and resigned. Their defeat was a humiliation; their resignation an inevitable submission; but they came back to office almost immediately under conditions that made the humiliation more humbling, and rendered their subsequent career more difficult by far than their past struggle for existence had been.

The famous controversy known as the "Bedchamber Question" made a way back for the Whigs into place. Gulliver ought to have had an opportunity of telling such

a story to the king of the Brobdingnagians, in order the better to impress him with a clear idea of the logical beauty of constitutional government. When Lord Melbourne resigned, the Queen sent for Peel, and told him with a simple and girlish frankness that she was sorry to have to part with her late ministers, of whose conduct she entirely approved, but that she bowed to constitutional usage. This must have been rather an astonishing beginning to the grave and formal Peel; but he was not a man to think any worse of the candid young Sovereign for her outspoken ways. The negotiations went on very smoothly as to the colleagues Peel meant to recommend to her Majesty, until he happened to notice the composition of the royal household as regarded the ladies most closely in attendance on the Queen. For example, he found that the wife of Lord Normanby and the sister of Lord Morpeth were the two ladies in closest attendance on her Majesty. Now it has to be borne in mind—it was proclaimed again and again during the negotiations—that the chief difficulty of the Conservatives would necessarily be in Ireland, where their policy would be altogether opposed to that of the Whigs. Lord Normanby had been Lord Lieutenant of Ireland under the Whigs, and Lord Morpeth, the amiable and accomplished Lord Carlisle of later time, Irish Secretary. It certainly could not be satisfactory for Peel to try to work a new Irish policy while the closest household companions of the Queen were the wife and sister of the displaced statesmen who directly represented the policy he had to supersede. Had this point of view been made clear to the Sovereign at first, it is hardly possible that any serious difficulty could have arisen. The Queen must have seen the obvious reasonableness of Peel's request; nor is it to be supposed that the two ladies in question could have

desired to hold their places under such circumstances. But unluckily some misunderstanding took place at the very beginning of the conversations on this point. Peel only desired to press for the retirement of the ladies holding the higher offices; he did not intend to ask for any change affecting a place lower in official rank than that of lady of the bedchamber. But somehow or other he conveyed to the mind of the Queen a different idea. She thought he meant to insist, as a matter of principle, upon the removal of her familiar attendants and household associates. Under this impression she consulted Lord John Russell, who advised her on what he understood to be the state of the facts. On his advice the Queen stated in reply that she could not "consent to a course which she conceives to be contrary to usage and is repugnant to her feelings." Sir Robert Peel held firm to his stipulation; and the chance of his then forming a Ministry was at an end. Lord Melbourne and his colleagues had to be recalled; and at a Cabinet meeting they adopted a minute declaring it reasonable "that the great offices of the Court and situations in the household held by members of Parliament should be included in the political arrangements made on a change in the Administration; but they are not of opinion that a similar principle should be applied or extended to the offices held by ladies in her Majesty's household."

In the country the incident created great excitement. Some Liberals bluntly insisted that it was not right in such a matter to consult the feelings of the Sovereign at all, and that the advice of the minister, and his idea of what was for the good of the country, ought alone to be considered. Nothing could be more undesirable than the position in which Lord Melbourne and his colleagues had allowed the Sovereign to place herself. The more

people in general came to think over the matter, the more clearly it was seen that Peel was in the right, although he had not made himself understood at first, and had, perhaps, not shown all through enough of consideration for the novelty of the young Sovereign's position. But no one could deliberately maintain the position at first taken up by the Whigs; and in point of fact they were soon glad to drop it as quickly and quietly as possible. The whole question, it may be said at once, was afterwards settled by a sensible compromise. It was agreed that on a change of Ministry the Queen would listen to any representation from the incoming Prime Minister as to the composition of her household, and would arrange for the retirement "of their own accord" of any ladies who were so closely related to the leaders of Opposition as to render their presence inconvenient. The Whigs came back to office utterly discredited. They had to tinker up somehow a new Jamaica Bill. They had declared that they could not remain in office unless they were allowed to deal in a certain way with Jamaica; and now that they were back again in office, they could not avoid trying to do something with the Jamaica business. They therefore introduced a new bill which was a mere compromise put together in the hope of its being allowed to pass. It was allowed to pass, after a fashion; that is, when the Opposition in the House of Lords had tinkered it and amended it at their pleasure. The bed-chamber question in fact had thrown Jamaica out of perspective. The unfortunate island must do the best it could now; in this country statesmen had graver matters to think of. Sir Robert Peel could not govern with Lady Normanby; the Whigs would not govern without her.

The Melbourne Government were prejudiced in the

public mind by these events, and by the attacks for which they gave so large an opportunity. The feeling in some parts of the country was still sentimentally with the Queen. At many a dinner-table it became the fashion to drink the health of her Majesty with a punning addition, not belonging to an order of wit any higher than that which in other days toasted the King "over the water;" or prayed of heaven to "send this crumb well down." The Queen was toasted as the sovereign of spirit who "would not let her belles be peeled." But the Ministry were almost universally believed to have placed themselves in a ridiculous light, and to have crept again into office "behind the petticoats of the ladies in waiting."

On January 16, 1840, the Queen, opening Parliament in person, announced her intention to marry her cousin, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha—a step which she trusted would be "conducive to the interests of my people as well as to my own domestic happiness." In the discussion which followed in the House of Commons, Sir Robert Peel observed that her Majesty had "the singular good fortune to be able to gratify her private feelings, while she performs her public duty, and to obtain the best guarantee for happiness by contracting an alliance founded on affection." Peel spoke the simple truth; it was indeed a marriage founded on affection. No marriage contracted in the humblest class could have been more entirely a union of love, and more free from what might be called selfish and worldly considerations. The Queen had for a long time loved her cousin. He was nearly her own age, the Queen being the elder by three months and two or three days. Francis Charles Augustus Albert Emmanuel was the full name of the young Prince. He was the second son of Ernest, Duke

of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld, and of his wife Louisa, daughter of Augustus, Duke of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg. Prince Albert was born at the Rosenau, one of his father's residences, near Coburg, on August 26, 1819.

Prince Albert was a young man to win the heart of any girl. He was singularly handsome, graceful and gifted. In princes, as we know, a small measure of beauty and accomplishment suffices to throw courtiers and court ladies into transports of admiration; but had Prince Albert been the son of a farmer or a butler, he must have been admired for his singular personal attractions. He had had a sound and a varied education. He had been brought up as if he were to be a professional musician, a professional chemist or botanist, and a professor of history and belles lettres and the fine arts. The scientific and the literary were remarkably blended in his bringing-up. He had begun to study the constitutional history of States, and was preparing himself to take an interest in politics. There was much of the practical and business-like about him, as he showed in after-life; he loved farming, and took a deep interest in machinery and in the growth of industrial science. His tastes were for a quiet, domestic and unostentatious life—a life of refined culture, of happy calm evenings, of art and poetry and genial communion with Nature. He was made happy by the songs of birds, and delighted in sitting alone and playing the organ. But there was in him too a great deal of the political philosopher. He loved to hear political and other questions well argued out, and once observed that a false argument jarred on his nerves as much as a false note in music. He seems to have had from his youth an all-pervading sense of duty. So far as we can guess, he was almost absolutely free from the ordinary follies, not to say sins, of youth.

Young as he was when he married the Queen, he devoted himself at once to what he conscientiously believed to be the duties of his station with a self-control and self-devotion rare even among the aged, and almost unknown in youth. He gave up every habit, however familiar and dear, every predilection, no matter how sweet, every indulgence of sentiment or amusement, that in any way threatened to interfere with the steadfast performance of the part he had assigned to himself. No man ever devoted himself more faithfully to the difficult duties of a high and new situation, or kept more strictly to his resolve. It was no task to him to be a tender husband and a loving father. This was a part of his sweet, pure and affectionate nature. It may well be doubted whether any other queen ever had a married life so happy as that of Queen Victoria.

The marriage of the Queen and the Prince took place on February 10, 1840. The reception given by the people in general to the Prince on his landing in England a few days before the ceremony, and on the day of the marriage, was cordial and even enthusiastic. But it is not certain whether there was a very cordial feeling to the Prince among all classes of politicians. A rumour of the most absurd kind had got abroad in certain circles that Prince Albert was not a Protestant—that he was in fact a member of the Church of Rome. Somewhat unfortunately, the declaration of the intended marriage to the Privy Council did not mention the fact that Albert was a Protestant Prince. The result was that in the debate on the address in the House of Lords, an unseemly altercation took place, an altercation the more to be regretted because it might have been so easily spared. The question was bluntly raised by no less a person than the Duke of Wellington whether the future husband of

the Queen was or was not a Protestant. The Duke actually charged the Ministry with having purposely left out the word "Protestant" in the announcements in order that they might not offend their Irish and Catholic supporters, and moved that the word "Protestant" be inserted in the congratulatory address to the Queen, and he carried his point, although Lord Melbourne held to the opinion that the word was unnecessary in describing a Prince who was not only a Protestant but descended from the most Protestant family in Europe. The lack of judgment and tact on the part of the Ministry was never more clearly shown than in the original omission of the word.

A few months after the marriage, a bill was passed naming Prince Albert Regent in the possible event of the death of the Queen, leaving issue. The passing of this bill was naturally regarded as of much importance to Prince Albert. It gave him to some extent the status in the country which he had not had before. No one could have started with a more resolute determination to stand clear of party politics than Prince Albert. He accepted at once his position as the husband of the Queen of a constitutional country. His own idea of his duty was that he should be the private secretary and unofficial counsellor of the Queen. To this purpose he devoted himself unswervingly. Outside that part of his duties, he constituted himself a sort of minister without portfolio of art and education. He took an interest, and often a leading part, in all projects and movements relating to the spread of education, the culture of art, and the promotion of industrial science. Yet it was long before he was thoroughly understood by the country. It was long before he became in any degree popular, and it may be doubted whether he ever was thoroughly and



generally popular. Not perhaps until his untimely death did the country find out how entirely disinterested and faithful his life had been, and how he had made the discharge of duty his business and his task. Prince Albert had not the ways of an Englishman, and the tendency of Englishmen, then as now, was to assume that to have manners other than those of an Englishman was to be so far unworthy of confidence. He was not made to shine in commonplace society. He could talk admirably about something, but he had not the gift of talking about nothing, and probably would not have cared much to cultivate such a faculty. He was fond of suggesting small innovations and improvements in established systems, to the annoyance of men with set ideas, who liked their own ways best. Thus it happened that he remained for many years, if not exactly unappreciated, yet not thoroughly appreciated, and that a considerable and very influential section of society was always ready to cavil at what he said, and find motive for suspicion in most things that he did. Perhaps he was best understood and most cordially appreciated among the poorer classes of his wife's subjects. He found also more cordial approval generally among the Radicals than among the Tories, or even the Whigs.

One reform which Prince Albert worked earnestly to bring about, was the abolition of duelling in the army. Nothing can testify more strikingly to the rapid growth of a genuine civilisation in Queen Victoria's reign than the utter discontinuance of the duelling system. When the Queen came to the throne, and for years after, it was still in full force. The duel plays a conspicuous part in the fiction and the drama of the Sovereign's earlier years. It was a common incident of all political controversies. It was an episode of most contested elec-

tions. It was often resorted to for the purpose of deciding the right or wrong of a half-drunken quarrel over a card table. It formed as common a theme of gossip as an elopement or a bankruptcy. Most of the eminent statesmen who were prominent in the earlier part of the Queen's reign had fought duels. At the present hour a duel in England would seem as absurd and barbarous an anachronism as an ordeal by touch or a witch-burning.

This is perhaps as suitable a place as any other to introduce some notice of the attempts that were made from time to time upon the life of the Queen. It is proper to say something of them, although not one possessed the slightest political importance, or could be said to illustrate anything more than sheer lunacy, or that morbid vanity and thirst for notoriety that is nearly akin to genuine madness. The first attempt was made on June 10, 1840, by Edward Oxford, a potboy of seventeen, who fired two shots at the Queen as she was driving up Constitution Hill with Prince Albert, but happily missed in each case. The jury pronounced him insane, and he was ordered to be kept in a lunatic asylum during her Majesty's pleasure. On May 30, 1842, a man named John Francis, son of a machinist in Drury Lane, fired a pistol at the Queen as she was driving down Constitution Hill, on the very spot where Oxford's attempt was made. Francis was sentenced to death, but her Majesty herself was anxious that the death-sentence should not be carried into effect, and it was finally commuted to one of transportation for life. The very day after this mitigation of punishment became publicly known another attempt was made by a hunch-backed lad named Bean, as the Queen was passing from Buckingham Palace to the Chapel Royal. The ambition which

fired most or all of the miscreants who thus disturbed the Queen and the country was that of the mountebank rather than of the assassin. A bill was introduced by Sir Robert Peel making such attempts punishable by transportation for seven years, or by imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years, "the culprit to be publicly or privately whipped as often and in such manner as the court shall direct, not exceeding thrice." Bean was convicted under this act and sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment in Millbank Penitentiary. This did not, however, conclude the attacks on the Queen. An Irish bricklayer, named Hamilton, fired a pistol, charged only with powder, at her Majesty, on Constitution Hill, on May 19, 1849, and was sentenced to seven years' transportation. A man named Robert Pate, once a lieutenant of hussars, struck her Majesty on the face with a stick as she was leaving the Duke of Cambridge's residence in her carriage on May 27, 1850. This man was sentenced to seven years' transportation, but the judge paid so much attention to the plea of insanity set up on his behalf, as to omit from his punishment the whipping which might have been ordered. On February 29, 1872, a lad of seventeen, named Arthur O'Connor, presented a pistol at the Queen as she was entering Buckingham Palace after a drive. The pistol, however, proved to be unloaded—an antique and useless or harmless weapon, with a flint lock which was broken, and in the barrel a piece of greasy red rag. The wretched lad held a paper in one hand which was found to be some sort of petition on behalf of the Fenian prisoners. He was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment and a whipping. Ten years later, on March 2, 1882, a man named Roderick Maclean fired at and missed the Queen as she was driving from the railway station at Windsor. Maclean was found to

be a person of weak intellect who had at one time been positively insane, and the attempt had no political significance whatever.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE AFGHAN WAR.

THE earliest days of the Peel Ministry fell upon trouble, not indeed at home, but abroad. At home the prospect still seemed bright. The birth of the Queen's eldest son was an event welcomed by national congratulation. There was still great distress in the agricultural districts; but there was a general confidence that the financial genius of Peel would quickly find some way to make burdens light, and that the condition of things all over the country would begin to mend. It was a region far removed from the knowledge and the thoughts of most Englishmen that supplied the news now beginning to come into England day after day, and to thrill the country with the tale of one of the greatest disasters to English policy and English arms to be found in all the record of our dealings with the East.

News travelled slowly then; and it was quite in the ordinary course of things that some part of the empire might be torn with convulsion for months before London knew that the even and ordinary condition of things had been disturbed. In this instance, the rejoicings at the accession of the young Queen were still going on, when a series of events had begun in Central Asia destined to excite the profoundest emotion in England, and to exercise the most powerful influence upon our foreign policy down to the present hour. On September 20, 1837, Captain Alexander Burnes arrived at Cabul, the capital

of the state of Cabul, in the north of Afghanistan. Burnes was a famous Orientalist and traveller; he had conducted an expedition into Central Asia; had published his travels in Bokhara, and had been sent on a mission by the Indian Government, in whose service he was, to study the navigation of the Indus. The object of his journey to Cabul in 1837 was to enter into commercial relations with Dost Mahomed, then ruler of Cabul, and with other chiefs of the western regions.

The great region of Afghanistan has been called the land of transition between Eastern and Western Asia. All the great ways that lead from Persia to India pass through that region. There is a proverb which declares that no one can be king of Hindostan without first becoming lord of Cabul. The Afghans are the ruling nation, but among them had long been settled Hindoos, Arabs, Armenians, Abyssinians, and men of other races and religions. The founder of the Afghan empire, Ahmed Shah, died in 1773. He had made an empire which stretched from Herat on the west to Sirhind on the east, and from the Oxus and Cashmere on the north to the Arabian Sea and the mouths of the Indus on the south. The death of his son, Timur Shah, delivered the kingdom up to the hostile factions, intrigues and quarrels of his sons; the leaders of a powerful tribe, the Barukzyes, took advantage of the events that arose out of this condition of things to dethrone the descendants of Ahmed Shah. When Captain Burnes visited Afghanistan in 1832, the only part of all their great inheritance which yet remained with the descendants of Ahmed Shah was the principality of Herat. The remainder of Afghanistan was parcelled out between Dost Mahomed and his brothers. Dost Mahomed was a man of extraordinary ability and energy. Although he was a usurper he was a sincere lover of his

country, and on the whole a wise and just ruler. When Captain Burnes visited Dost Mahomed, Dost Mahomed professed to be a sincere friend of the English Government and people. There was, however, at that time a quarrel going on between the Shah of Persia and the Prince of Herat, the last enthroned representative, as has been already said, of the great family on whose fall Dost Mahomed and his brothers had mounted into power. The strong impression at the time in England, and among the authorities in India, was that Persia herself was but a puppet in the hands of Russia, and that the attack on Herat was the first step of a great movement of Russia towards our Indian dominion.

Undoubtedly Russia did set herself for some reason to win the friendship and alliance of Dost Mahomed; and Captain Burnes was for his part engaged in the same endeavour. Burnes always insisted that Dost Mahomed himself was sincerely anxious to become an ally of England, and that he offered more than once on his own free part to dismiss the Russian agents even without seeing them, if Burnes desired him to do so. But for some reason Burnes's superiors had the profoundest distrust of Dost Mahomed. It was again and again impressed on Burnes that he must regard Dost Mahomed as a treacherous enemy and as a man playing the part of Persia and of Russia.

Captain Burnes then was placed in the painful difficulty of having to carry out a policy of which he entirely disapproved. He believed in Dost Mahomed as a friend, and he was ordered to regard him as an enemy. On the other hand, Dost Mahomed was placed in a position of great difficulty and danger. If England would not support him, he must for his own safety find alliances elsewhere; in Russian statecraft for example. Runjeet

Singh, the daring and successful adventurer who had annexed the whole province of Cashmere to his dominions, was the enemy of Dost Mahomed and the faithful ally of England. Dost Mahomed thought the British Government could assist him in coming to terms with Runjeet Singh, and Burnes had assured him that the British Government would do all it could to establish satisfactory terms of peace between Afghanistan and the Punjaub, over which Runjeet Singh ruled. Burnes, however, was unable to impress his superiors with any belief either in Dost Mahomed or in the policy which he himself advocated. The English Government had presented to the House of Commons his despatches in so mutilated and altered a form, that Burnes was made to seem as if he actually approved and recommended the policy which he especially warned us to avoid. The result was that Lord Auckland, the Governor-General of India, at length resolved to treat Dost Mahomed as an enemy, and to drive him from Cabul. Lord Auckland, therefore, entered into a treaty with Runjeet Singh and Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk, the exiled representative of what we may call the legitimist rulers of Afghanistan, for the restoration of the latter to the throne of his ancestors, and for the destruction of the power of Dost Mahomed.

Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk was at the time living in exile, without the faintest hope of ever again being restored to his dominions. We pulled the poor man out of his obscurity, told him that his people were yearning for him, and that we would set him on his throne once more.

We conquered Dost Mahomed and dethroned him. He made a bold and brilliant, sometimes even a splendid resistance. As we approached Cabul, Dost Mahomed abandoned his capital and fled with a few horsemen

across the Indus. Shah Soojah entered Cabul accompanied by the British officers. It was to have been a triumphal entry. The hearts of those who believed in his cause must have sunk within them when they saw how the Shah was received by the people. The city received him in sullen silence. Few of its people condescended even to turn out to see him as he passed. The vast majority stayed away and disdained even to look at him. One would have thought that the least observant eye must have seen that his throne could not last a moment longer than the time during which the strength of Britain was willing to support it. The British army, however, withdrew, leaving only a contingent of some eight thousand men, besides the Shah's own hirelings, to maintain him for the present. Sir W. Macnaghten seems to have really believed that the work was done, and that Shah Soojah was as safe on his throne as Queen Victoria. He was destined to be very soon and very cruelly undeceived.

Dost Mahomed made more than one effort to regain his place. He invaded Shah Soojah's dominions, and on November 2, 1840, he won the admiration of the English themselves by the brilliant stand he made against them. In this battle of Purwandurrah victory might not unreasonably have been claimed for Dost Mahomed. But Dost Mahomed had the wisdom of a statesman as well as the genius of a soldier. He knew well that he could not hold out against the strength of England. The evening after his brilliant exploit in the field Dost Mahomed rode quietly up to the quarters of Sir W. Macnaghten, announced himself as Dost Mahomed, tendered to the envoy the sword that had flashed so splendidly across the field of the previous day's fight, and surrendered himself a prisoner. His sword was returned; he was



treated with all honour; and a few days afterwards he was sent to India, where a residence and a revenue were assigned to him.

But the withdrawal of Dost Mahomed from the scene did nothing to secure the reign of the unfortunate Shah Soojah. Sir W. Macnaghten was warned of danger, but seemed to take no heed. Some fatal blindness appears to have suddenly fallen on the eyes of our people in Cabul. On November 2, 1841, an insurrection broke out. Sir Alexander Burnes lived in the city itself; Sir W. Macnaghten and the military commander, Major-General Elphinstone, were with the troops in cantonments at some little distance outside the city. The insurrection might have been put down in the first instance easily, but it was allowed to grow up without attempt at control. Sir Alexander Burnes could not be got to believe that it was anything serious even when a fanatical and furious mob were besieging his own house. The fanatics were especially bitter against Burnes, because they believed that he had been guilty of treachery. They accused him of having pretended to be the friend of Dost Mahomed, deceived him, and brought the English into the country. To the last Burnes refused to believe that he was in danger. He harangued the raging mob, and endeavoured to bring them to reason. He was murdered in the tumult. He and his brother and all those with them were hacked to pieces with Afghan knives. He was only in his thirty-seventh year when he was murdered. Fate seldom showed with more strange and bitter malice her proverbial irony than when she made him the first victim of the policy adopted in despite of his best advice and his strongest warnings.

The murder of Burnes was only a beginning. The whole country threw itself into insurrection. The Afghans

attacked the cantonments and actually compelled the English to abandon the forts in which all our commissariat was stored. We were thus threatened with famine even if we could resist the enemy in arms. We were strangely unfortunate in our civil and military leaders. Sir W. Macnaghten was a man of high character and good purpose, but he was weak and credulous. The commander, General Elphinstone, was old, infirm, tortured by disease, broken down both in mind and body, incapable of forming a purpose of his own, or of holding to one suggested by anybody else. His second in command was a far stronger and abler man, but unhappily the two could never agree.

A new figure appeared on the scene, a dark and a fierce apparition. This was Akbar Khan, the favourite son of Dost Mahomed. He was a daring, a clever, an unscrupulous young man. From the moment when he entered Cabul he became the real leader of the insurrection against Shah Soojah and us. Macnaghten, persuaded by the military commander that the position of things was hopeless, consented to enter into negotiations with Akbar Khan. Akbar Khan received him at first with contemptuous insolence—as a haughty conqueror receives some ignoble and humiliated adversary. It was agreed that the British troops should quit Afghanistan at once; that Dost Mahomed and his family should be sent back to Afghanistan; that on his return the unfortunate Shah Soojah should be allowed to take himself off to India or where he would; and that some British officers should be left at Cabul as hostages for the fulfilment of the conditions.

The evacuation did not take place at once, although the fierce winter was setting in, and the snow was falling heavily, ominously. On both sides there were dallyings

and delays. At last Akbar Khan made a new and startling proposition to our envoy. It was that they two should enter into a secret treaty, should unite their arms against the other chiefs, and should keep Shah Soojah on the throne as nominal king, with Akbar Khan as his vizier. Macnaghten caught at the proposals. He had entered into terms of negotiation with the Afghan chiefs together; he now consented to enter into a secret treaty with one of the chiefs to turn their joint arms against the others. It would be idle and shameful to attempt to defend such a policy. When every excuse has been thought of, we must still be glad to believe that there are not many Englishmen who would, under any circumstances, have consented even to give a hearing to the proposals of Akbar Khan.

Macnaghten's error was dearly expiated. He went out at noon next day to confer with Akbar Khan on the banks of the neighbouring river. Three of his officers were with him. Akbar Khan was ominously surrounded by friends and retainers. Not many words were spoken; the expected conference had hardly begun when a signal was given or an order issued by Akbar Khan, and the envoy and the officers were suddenly seized from behind. A scene of wild confusion followed, in which hardly anything is clear and certain but the one most horrible incident. The envoy struggled with Akbar Khan, who had himself seized Macnaghten; Akbar Khan drew from his belt one of a pair of pistols which Macnaghten had presented to him a short time before, and shot him through the body. The fanatics who were crowding round hacked the body to pieces with their knives. Of the three officers one was killed on the spot; the other two were forced to mount Afghan horses and carried away as prisoners.

It seems certain that the treachery of Akbar, base as it was, did not contemplate more than the seizure of the envoy and his officers. On the fatal day the latter resisted and struggled; Akbar Khan heard a cry of alarm that the English soldiers were coming out of cantonments to rescue the envoy; and, wild with passion, he suddenly drew his pistol and fired. This was the statement made again and again by Akbar Khan himself. The explanation does not much relieve the darkness of Akbar Khan's character. There is not the slightest reason to suppose that he would have shrunk from any treachery or any cruelty which served his purpose. But it is well to bear in mind that poor Macnaghten would not have been murdered had he not consented to meet Akbar Khan and treat with him on a proposition to which an English official should never have listened.

The little English force in the cantonments did not know until the following day that any calamity had befallen the envoy. On December 24, 1841, came a letter from one of the officers seized by Akbar Khan, accompanying proposals for a treaty from the Afghan chiefs. It is hard now to understand how any English officers could have consented to enter into terms with the murderers of Macnaghten before his mangled body could well have ceased to bleed. We can all see the difficulty of their position. General Elphinstone and his second in command, Brigadier Shelton, were convinced that it would be equally impossible to stay where they were or to cut their way through the Afghans. But it might have occurred to many that they were nevertheless not bound to treat with the Afghans; that they were not ordered by fate to accept whatever the conquerors chose to offer. One English officer of mark did counsel his superiors in this spirit. This was Major Eldred Pottinger.

Pottinger was for cutting their way through all enemies and difficulties as far as they could, and then occupying the ground with their dead bodies. But his advice was hardly taken into consideration. It was determined to treat with the Afghans; and treating with the Afghans now meant accepting any terms the Afghans chose to impose on their fallen enemies. In the negotiations that went on some written documents were exchanged. One of these, drawn up by the English negotiators, contains an appeal to the Afghan conquerors which we believe to be absolutely unique in the history of British dealings with armed enemies. "In friendship, kindness and consideration are necessary, not overpowering the weak with sufferings!" In friendship! we appealed to the friendship of Macnaghten's murderers; to the friendship, in any case, of the man whose father we had dethroned and driven into exile. Not overpowering the weak with sufferings! The weak were the English! One might fancy he was reading the plaintive and piteous appeal of some forlorn and feeble tribe of helpless half-breeds for the mercy of arrogant and mastering rulers. Only the other day, it would seem, these men had received in surrender the bright sword of Dost Mahomed. Now they could only plead for a little gentleness of consideration, and had no thought of resistance, and did not any longer seem to know how to die.

We accepted the terms of treaty offered to us. The English were at once to take themselves off out of Afghanistan, giving up all their guns except six, which they were allowed to retain for their necessary defence in their mournful journey home; they were to leave behind all the treasure, and to guarantee the payment of something additional for the safe conduct of the poor little army to Peshawur or to Jellalabad; and they were to

hand over six officers as hostages for the due fulfilment of the conditions. The conditions included the immediate release of Dost Mahomed and his family and their return to Afghanistan. When the treaty was signed, the officers who had been seized when Macnaghten was murdered were released.

The withdrawal from Cabul began. It was the heart of a cruel winter. The English had to make their way through the awful Pass of Koord Cabul. This stupendous gorge runs for some five miles between mountain ranges so narrow, lofty and grim, that in the winter season the rays of the sun can hardly pierce its darkness even at the noontide. Down the centre dashed a precipitous mountain torrent so fiercely that the stern frost of that terrible time could not stay its course. The snow lay in masses on the ground; the rocks and stones that raised their heads above the snow in the way of the unfortunate travellers were slippery with frost. Soon the white snow began to be stained and splashed with blood. Fearful as this Koord Cabul Pass was, it was only a degree worse than the road which for two whole days the English had to traverse to reach it. The army which set out from Cabul numbered more than four thousand fighting men, of whom Europeans, it should be said, formed but a small proportion; and some twelve thousand camp followers of all kinds. There were also many women and children. Lady Macnaghten, widow of the murdered envoy; Lady Sale, whose gallant husband was holding Jellalabad at the near end of the Khyber Pass towards the Indian frontier; Mrs. Sturt, her daughter, soon to be widowed by the death of her young husband; Mrs. Trevor and her seven children, and many other pitiable fugitives. The winter journey would have been cruel and dangerous enough in time of peace; but this journey had to be ac-

complished in the midst of something far worse than common war. At every step of the road, every opening of the rocks, the unhappy crowd of confused and heterogeneous fugitives were beset by bands of savage fanatics, who with their long guns and long knives were murdering all they could reach. The English soldiers, weary, weak and crippled by frost, could make but a poor fight against the savage Afghans. Men, women and children, horses, ponies, camels, the wounded, the dying, the dead, all crowded together in almost inextricable confusion among the snow and amid the relentless enemies.

Akbar Khan constantly appeared on the scene during this journey of terror. At every opening or break of the long straggling flight he and his little band of followers showed themselves on the horizon, trying still to protect the English from utter ruin, as he declared; come to gloat over their misery and to see that it was surely accomplished, some of the unhappy English were ready to believe. Yet his presence was something that seemed to give a hope of protection. Akbar Khan at length startled the English by a proposal that the women and children who were with the army should be handed over to his custody to be conveyed by him in safety to Peshawur. There was nothing better to be done. The women and children and the married men whose wives were among this party were taken from the unfortunate army and placed under the care of Akbar Khan, and Lady Macnaghten had to undergo the agony of a personal interview with the man whose own hand had killed her husband. Akbar Khan was kindly in his language, and declared to the unhappy widow that he would give his right arm to undo, if it were possible, the deed that he had done.

The march was resumed; new horrors set in; new heaps of corpses stained the snow; and then Akbar Khan presented himself with a fresh proposition. He demanded that General Elphinstone, the commander, with his second in command, and also one other officer, should hand themselves over to him as hostages. He promised if this were done to exert himself more than before to restrain the fanatical tribes, and also to provide the army in the Koord Cabul Pass with provisions. There was nothing for it but to submit; and the English general himself became, with the women and children, a captive in the hands of the inexorable enemy.

Then the march of the army, without a general, went on again. Soon it became the story of a general without an army; before very long there was neither general nor army. It is idle to lengthen a tale of mere horrors. The straggling remnant of an army entered the Jugdulluk Pass—a dark, steep, narrow, ascending path between crags. The miserable toilers found that the fanatical, implacable tribes had barricaded the pass. All was over. The army of Cabul was finally extinguished in that barricaded pass. It was a trap; the British were taken in it. A few mere fugitives escaped from the scene of actual slaughter, and were on the road to Jellalabad, where Sale and his little army were holding their own. When they were within sixteen miles of Jellalabad the number was reduced to six. Of these six, five were killed by straggling marauders on the way. One man alone reached Jellalabad to tell the tale. Literally one man, Dr. Brydon, came to Jellalabad out of a moving host which had numbered in all some sixteen thousand when it set out on its march. The curious eye will search through history or fiction in vain for any picture more thrilling with the suggestions of an awful catas-



trophe than that of this solitary survivor, faint and reeling on his jaded horse, as he appeared under the walls of Jellalabad, to bear the tidings of our Thermopylæ of pain and shame.

This is the crisis of the story. The rest is all recovery. The garrison at Jellalabad had received before Dr. Brydon's arrival an intimation that they were to go out and march towards India in accordance with the terms of the treaty extorted from Elphinstone at Cabul. They very properly declined to be bound by a treaty which, as General Sale rightly conjectured, had been "forced from our envoy and military commander with the knives at their throats." General Sale's determination was clear and simple. "I propose to hold this place on the part of Government until I receive its order to the contrary." This resolve of Sale's was really the turning point of the history. Akbar Khan besieged Jellalabad. The garrison held out fearlessly; they resisted every attempt of Akbar Khan to advance upon their works, and at length, when it became certain that General Pollock was forcing the Khyber Pass to come to their relief, they issued boldly out of their forts, forced a battle on the Afghan chief, and completely defeated him. Before Pollock, having gallantly fought his way through the Khyber Pass, had reached Jellalabad, the beleaguering army had been entirely defeated and dispersed. General Nott at Candahar was ready now to cooperate with General Sale and General Pollock for any movement on Cabul which the authorities might advise or sanction. Meanwhile the unfortunate Shah Soojah, whom we had restored with so much pomp of announcement to the throne of his ancestors, was dead. He was assassinated in Cabul, soon after the departure of the British, by the orders of some of the chiefs who detested him; and his

body, stripped of its royal robes and its many jewels, was flung into a ditch. All Shah Soojah owed to us was a few weeks of idle pomp and absurd dreams, a bitter awakening and a shameful death.

During this time a new Governor-General had arrived in India. Lord Auckland's time had run out, and during its latter months he had become nerveless and despondent because of the utter failure of the policy which in an evil hour for himself and his country he had been induced to undertake. He was an honourable, kindly gentleman, and the news of all the successive calamities fell upon him with a crushing, an overwhelming weight. He seemed to have no other idea than that of getting all our troops as quickly as might be out of Afghanistan, and shaking the dust of the place off our feet for ever. He was, in fact, a broken man.

His successor was Lord Ellenborough. He was well acquainted with the affairs of India. He had come into office under Sir Robert Peel on the resignation of the Melbourne Ministry. He was looked upon as a man of great ability and energy. It was known that his personal predilections were for the career of a soldier. He was fond of telling his hearers then and since that the life of a camp was that which he should have loved to lead. He was a man of great and, in certain lights, apparently splendid abilities. There was a certain Orientalism about his language, his aspirations and his policy. He loved gorgeousness and dramatic—ill-natured persons said theatric—effects. Life arranged itself in his eyes as a superb and showy pageant of which it would have been his ambition to form the central figure. His eloquence was often of a lofty and noble order. But if Lord Ellenborough was in some respects a man of genius, he was also a man whose love of mere effects often made him

seem like a quack. He was a man of great abilities and earnestness, who had in him a strong dash of the play-actor, who at the most serious moment of emergency always thought of how to display himself effectively, and would have met the peril of an empire with an overmastering desire to show to the best personal advantage.

Lord Ellenborough's appointment was hailed by all parties in India as the most auspicious that could be made. But those who thought in this way found themselves suddenly disappointed. Lord Ellenborough uttered and wrote a few showy sentences about revenging our losses and "re-establishing in all its original brilliancy our military character," and then at once he announced that the only object of the Government was to get the troops out of Afghanistan as quickly as might be, and almost on any terms. A general outcry was raised in India and among the troops in Afghanistan against the extraordinary policy which Lord Ellenborough propounded. Englishmen, in fact, refused to believe in it; took it as something that must be put aside. The Governor-General himself after a while quietly put it aside. He allowed the military commanders in Afghanistan to pull their resources together and prepare for inflicting signal chastisement on the enemy. They were not long in doing this. They encountered the enemy wherever he showed himself and defeated him. They recaptured town after town, until at length, on September 15, 1842, General Pollock's force entered Cabul. A few days after, as a lasting mark of retribution for the crimes which had been committed there, the British commander ordered the destruction of the great bazaar of Cabul, where the mangled remains of the unfortunate envoy Macnaghten had been exhibited in brutal triumph and joy to the Afghan populace.

The captives, or hostages, who were hurried away that terrible January night at the command of Akbar Khan had yet to be recovered. There was a British general who was disposed to leave them to their fate and take no trouble about them, and who declared himself under the conviction, from the tenor of all Lord Ellenborough's despatches, that the recovery of the prisoners was "a matter of indifference to the Government." Better counsels however prevailed. General Pollock insisted on an effort being made to recover the prisoners before the troops began to return to India, and he appointed to this noble duty the husband of one of the hostage ladies—Sir Robert Sale. The prisoners were recovered with greater ease than was expected—so many of them as were yet alive. Poor General Elphinstone had long before succumbed to disease and hardship. The ladies had gone through strange privations. They suffered almost every fierce alternation of cold and heat. They had to live on the coarsest fare; they were lodged in a manner which would have made the most wretched prison accommodation of a civilised country seem luxurious by comparison; they were in constant uncertainty and fear, not knowing what might befall. Yet they seem to have held up their courage and spirits wonderfully well, and to have kept the hearts of the children alive with mirth and sport at moments of the utmost peril. They were carried off to the wild rugged regions of the Indian Caucasus, under the charge of one of Akbar Khan's soldiers of fortune. This man had begun to suspect that things were well-nigh hopeless with Akbar Khan. He was induced to enter into an agreement with the prisoners securing him a large reward, and a pension for life, if he enabled them to escape. He accordingly declared that he renounced his allegiance to Akbar Khan: all the

more readily, seeing that news came in of the chief's total defeat and flight, no one knew whither. The prisoners and their escort, lately their gaoler and guards, set forth on their way to General Pollock's camp. On their way they met the English parties sent out to seek for them.

There is a very different ending to the episode of the English captives in Bokhara. Colonel Stoddart, who had been sent to the Persian camp in the beginning of all these events to insist that Persia must desist from the siege of Herat, was sent subsequently on a mission to the Ameer of Bokhara. The Ameer threw Stoddart into prison. Captain Conolly undertook to endeavour to effect the liberation of Stoddart, but could only succeed in sharing his sufferings, and at last his fate. Nothing was done to obtain their release beyond diplomatic efforts, and appeals to the magnanimity of the Ameer which had not any particular effect. Dr. Wolff, the celebrated traveller and missionary, afterwards undertook an expedition of his own in the hope of saving the unfortunate captives; but he only reached Bokhara in time to hear that they had been put to death. The moment and actual manner of their death cannot be known to positive certainty, but there is little doubt they were executed on the same day by the orders of the Ameer.

On October 1, 1842, exactly four years since Lord Auckland's proclamation announcing and justifying the intervention to restore Shah Soojah, Lord Ellenborough issued another proclamation announcing the complete failure and the revocation of the policy of his predecessor. Lord Ellenborough declared that "to force a sovereign upon a reluctant people would be as inconsistent with the policy as it is with the principles of the British Government;" that therefore they would recognise any

Government approved by the Afghans themselves; that the British arms would be withdrawn from Afghanistan, and that the Government of India would remain "content with the limit nature appears to have assigned to its empire." Dost Mahomed was released from his captivity, and before long was ruler of Cabul once again. Thus ended the story of our expedition to reorganise the internal condition of Afghanistan.

## CHAPTER V.

### PEEL'S ADMINISTRATION.

"THE year 1843," said O'Connell, "is and shall be the great Repeal year." In the year 1843, at all events, O'Connell was by far the most prominent politician in these countries who had never been in office. O'Connell was a thorough Celt. He represented all the impulsiveness, the quick-changing emotions, the passionate, exaggerated loves and hatreds, the heedlessness of statement, the tendency to confound impressions with facts, the ebullient humour—all the other qualities that are especially characteristic of the Celt. As the orator of a popular assembly, as the orator of a monster meeting, he probably never had an equal in these countries. He had many of the physical endowments that are especially favourable to success in such a sphere. He had a herculean frame, a stately presence, a face capable of expressing easily and effectively the most rapid alternations of mood, and a voice which all hearers admit to have been almost unrivalled for strength and sweetness. Its power, its pathos, its passion, its music have been described in words of positive rapture by men who detested O'Connell, and who would rather if they could have denied to him any claim

on public attention, even in the matter of voice. He spoke without studied preparation, and of course had all the defects of such a style. He fell into repetition and into carelessness of construction; he was hurried away into exaggeration and sometimes into mere bombast. But he had all the peculiar success, too, which rewards the orator who can speak without preparation. He always spoke right to the hearts of his hearers. He entered the House of Commons when he was nearly fifty-four years of age. Most persons supposed that the style of speaking he had formed, first in addressing juries, and next in rousing Irish mobs, must cause his failure when he came to appeal to the unsympathetic and fastidious House of Commons. But it is certain that O'Connell became one of the most successful Parliamentary orators of his time.

He had borne the leading part in carrying Catholic Emancipation. It must in a short time have been carried if O'Connell had never lived. But it was carried just then by virtue of O'Connell's bold agitation. O'Connell and the Irish people saw that Catholic Emancipation had been yielded to pressure rather than to justice; it is not wonderful if they thought that pressure might prevail as well in the matter of Repeal. Nor is there any reason to doubt that O'Connell himself believed in the possibility of accomplishing his purpose. We are apt now to think of the Union between England and Ireland as of time-honoured endurance. It had been scarcely thirty years in existence when O'Connell entered Parliament. To O'Connell it appeared simply as a modern innovation which had nothing to be said for it except that a majority of Englishmen had by threats and bribery forced it on a majority of Irishmen. He perceived the possibility of forming a powerful party in Parliament, which would be

free to co-operate with all English parties without coalescing with any, and might thus turn the balance of factions and decide the fate of Ministries. He believed that under a constitutional Government the will of four-fifths of a nation, if peacefully, perseveringly and energetically expressed, must sooner or later be triumphant.

In many respects O'Connell differed from more modern Irish Nationalists. He was a thorough Liberal. He was a devoted opponent of negro slavery; he was a staunch Free Trader; he was a friend of popular education; he was an enemy to all excess; he was opposed to strikes; he was an advocate of religious equality everywhere. He preached the doctrine of constitutional agitation strictly, and declared that no political Reform was worth the shedding of one drop of blood. It may be asked how it came about that with all these excellent attributes, which all critics now allow to him, O'Connell was so detested by the vast majority of the English people. One reason undoubtedly is that O'Connell deliberately revived and worked up for his political purposes the almost extinct national hatreds of Celt and Saxon. As a phrase of political controversy, he may be said to have invented the word "Saxon." In the common opinion of Englishmen, all the evils of Ireland, all the troubles attaching to the connection between the two countries, had arisen from this unmitigated, rankling hatred of Celt for Saxon. Yet O'Connell was in no sense a revolutionist. Of the Irish rebels of '98 he spoke with as savage an intolerance as the narrowest English Tories could show in speaking of himself. The Tones, and Emmets, and Fitzgeralds, whom so many of the Irish people adored, were in O'Connell's eyes, and in his words, only "a gang of miscreants." His theory and his



policy were that Ireland was to be saved by a dictatorship entrusted to himself."

He had a Parliamentary system by means of which he proposed to approach more directly the question of Repeal of the Union. He got seats in the House of Commons for a number of his sons, his nephews, and his sworn retainers. He had an almost supreme control over the Irish constituencies, and whenever a vacancy took place he sent down a Repeal candidate to contest it. He always inculcated and insisted on the necessity of order and peace. Indeed, as he proposed to carry on his agitation altogether by the help of the bishops and the priests, it was not possible for him, even were he so inclined, to conduct it on any other than peaceful principles. "The man who commits a crime gives strength to the enemy," was a maxim which he was never weary of impressing upon his followers. The Temperance movement set on foot with such remarkable and sudden success by Father Mathew was at once turned to account by O'Connell. He called upon his followers to join it, and was always boasting of his "noble army of Teetotalers." He started that system of agitation by monster meeting which has since his time been regularly established among us as a principal part of all political organisation for a definite purpose. He founded in Dublin a Repeal Association which met on Burgh Quay, in a place which he styled Conciliation Hall. The famous monster meetings were usually held on a Sunday, on some open spot, mostly selected for its historic fame, and with all the picturesque surroundings of hill and stream. From the dawn of the summer day the Repealers were thronging to the scene of the meeting. They came from all parts of the neighbouring country for

miles and miles. They were commonly marshalled and guided by their parish priests. They all attended the services of their Church before the meeting began.

O'Connell himself, it is needless to say, was always the great orator of the day. His magnificent voice enabled him to do what no genius and no eloquence less aptly endowed could have done. He could send his lightest word thrilling to the extreme of the vast concourse of people whom he desired to move. He swayed them with the magic of an absolute control. He understood all the moods of his people; to address himself to them came naturally to him. He made them roar with laughter; he made them weep; he made them thrill with indignation. As the shadow runs over a field, so the impression of his varying eloquence ran over the assemblage. He commanded the emotions of his hearers as a consummate conductor sways the energies of his orchestra.

The crowds who attended the monster meetings came in a sort of military order and with a certain parade of military discipline. At the meeting held on the Hill of Tara, where O'Connell stood beside the stone said to have been used for the coronation of the ancient monarchs of Ireland, it is declared on the authority of careful and unsympathetic witnesses that a quarter of a million of people must have been present. The Government naturally felt that there was a very considerable danger in the massing together of such vast crowds of men in something like military array and under the absolute leadership of one man, who openly avowed that he had called them together to show England what was the strength her statesmen would have to fear if they continued to deny Repeal to his demand. The Government at last resolved to interfere. A meeting was announced to be

held at Clontarf on Sunday, October 8, 1843. Clontarf is near Dublin, and is famous in Irish history as the scene of a great victory of the Irish over their Danish invaders. It was intended that this meeting should surpass in numbers and in earnestness the assemblage at Tara. On the very day before the 8th the Lord-Lieutenant issued a proclamation prohibiting the meeting as "calculated to excite reasonable and well-grounded apprehension" in that its object was "to accomplish alterations in the laws and constitution of the realm by intimidation and the demonstration of physical force." O'Connell's power over the people was never shown more effectively than in the control which at that critical moment he was still able to exercise. O'Connell declared that the orders of the Lord-Lieutenant must be obeyed; that the meeting must not take place; and that the people must return to their homes. The "uncrowned king," as some of his admirers loved to call him, was obeyed, and no meeting was held.

From that moment, however, the great power of the Repeal agitation was gone. It was now made clear that he did not intend to have resort to force. The young and fiery followers of the great agitator renounced all faith in him. All the imposing demonstrations of physical strength lost their value when it was made positively known that they were only demonstrations, and that nothing was ever to come of them.

The Government at once proceeded to the prosecution of O'Connell and some of his principal associates. They were charged with conspiring to raise and excite disaffection among her Majesty's subjects, to excite them to hatred and contempt of the Government and Constitution of the realm. The jury found O'Connell guilty along with most of his associates, and he was sentenced

to twelve months' imprisonment and a fine of 2,000*l.* The others received lighter sentences. O'Connell appealed to the House of Lords against the sentence. In the meantime he issued a proclamation to the Irish people commanding them to keep perfectly quiet and not to commit any offence against the law. "Every man," said one of his proclamations, "who is guilty of the slightest breach of the peace is an enemy of me and of Ireland." The Irish people took him at his word and remained perfectly quiet.

O'Connell and his principal associates were committed to Richmond Prison, in Dublin. The trial had been delayed in various ways, and the sentence was not pronounced until May 24, 1844. The appeal to the House of Lords was heard in the following September, the judgment was reversed, and O'Connell and his associates were set at liberty. There was all manner of national rejoicing when the decision of the House of Lords set O'Connell and his fellow-prisoners free. There were illuminations and banquets and meetings and triumphal processions, renewed declarations of allegiance to the great leader, and renewed protestations on his part that Repeal was coming. But his reign was over. His health broke down more and more every day. He became seized with a profound melancholy. Only one desire seemed left to him, the desire to close his stormy career in Rome. He longed to lie down in the shadow of the dome of St. Peter's and rest there, and there die. His youth had been wild in more ways than one, and he had long been under the influence of a profound penitence. He had killed a man in a duel, and was through all his after life haunted by regret for the deed, although it was really forced on him, and he had acted only as any other man of his time would have acted in such conditions.

But now in his old and sinking days all the errors of his youth and his strong manhood came back upon him, and he longed to steep the painful memories in the sacred influences of Rome. He hurried to Italy. He reached Genoa. His strength wholly failed him there, and he died, still far from Rome, on May 15, 1847.

Some important steps in the progress of what may be described as social legislation are part of the history of Peel's Government. The Act of Parliament which prohibited absolutely the employment of women and girls in mines and collieries was rendered unavoidable by the fearful exposures made through the instrumentality of a Commission appointed to inquire into the whole subject. This Commission was appointed on the motion of the then Lord Ashley, since better known as the Earl of Shaftesbury, a man who during the whole of a long career has always devoted himself to the task of brightening the lives and lightening the burthens of the working classes and the poor. In some of the coal mines women were literally employed as beasts of burden. Lord Ashley had the happiness and the honour of putting a stop to this infamous sort of labour for ever by the Act of 1842, which declared that, after a certain limited period, no woman or girl whatever should be employed in mines and collieries.

Lord Ashley was less completely successful in his endeavour to secure a ten hours' limitation for the daily labour of women and young persons in factories. By a vigorous annual agitation on the general subject of factory labour, he brought the Government up to the point of undertaking legislation on the subject. They first introduced a bill which combined a limitation of the labour of children in factories with a plan for compulsory education among the children. Afterwards the Govern-

ment brought in another bill, which became in the end the Factories Act of 1844. It was during the passing of this measure that Lord Ashley tried unsuccessfully to introduce his ten hours' limit. The bill diminished the working hours of children under thirteen years of age, and fixed them at six and a half hours each day; extended somewhat the time during which they were to be under daily instruction, and did a good many other useful and wholesome things. The principle of legislative interference to protect youthful workers in factories had been already established by the Act of 1833; and Lord Ashley's agitation only obtained for it a somewhat extended application. It has since that time again and again received further extension.

Many other things done by Sir Robert Peel's Government aroused bitter controversy and agitation. There was, for example, the grant to the Roman Catholic College of Maynooth, a college for the education specially of young men who sought to enter the ranks of the priesthood. The grant was not a new thing. Since before the Act of Union a grant had been made for the college. The Government of Sir Robert Peel only proposed to make that which was insufficient sufficient; to enable the college to be kept in repair and to accomplish the purpose for which it was founded. Yet the Ministerial proposition called up a very tempest of clamorous bigotry all over the country. Peel carried his measure, although nearly half his own party in the House of Commons voted against it on the second reading.

There was objection within the Ministry, as well as without, to the Maynooth grant. Mr. Gladstone, who had been doing admirable work, first as Vice-President, and afterwards as President, of the Board of Trade, resigned his office because of this proposal. He acted, perhaps,

with a too sensitive chivalry. He had written a work on the relations of Church and State, and he did not think the views expressed in that book left him free to co-operate in the Ministerial measure. Some staid politicians were shocked, many smiled, not a few sneered. The public in general applauded the spirit of disinterestedness which dictated the young statesman's act.

Mr. Gladstone, however, supported by voice and vote the Queen's Colleges scheme, another of Peel's measures which aroused much clamour. The proposal of the Government was to establish in Ireland three colleges, one in Cork, the second in Belfast, and the third in Galway, and to affiliate these to a new university to be called the "Queen's University in Ireland." The teaching in these colleges was to be purely secular. Nothing could be more admirable than the intentions of Peel and his colleagues. Peel carried his measure; but from both sides of the House and from the extreme party in each Church came an equally vigorous denunciation of the proposal to separate secular from religious education.

One small instalment of justice to a much injured and long suffering religious body was accomplished without any trouble by Sir Robert Peel's Government. This was the bill for removing the test by which Jews were excluded from certain municipal offices. A Jew might be high-sheriff of a county, or Sheriff of London, but, with an inconsistency which was as ridiculous as it was narrow-minded, he was prevented from becoming a mayor, an alderman, or even a member of the Common Council. The oath which had to be taken included the words, "on the true faith of a Christian." Lord Lyndhurst, the Lord Chancellor, introduced a measure to get rid of this absurd anomaly; and the House of Lords, which had firmly rejected similar proposals of relief before, passed it with-

out any difficulty. It was of course passed by the House of Commons, which had done its best to introduce the reform in previous sessions, and without success.

The Bank Charter Act, separating the issue from the banking department of the Bank of England, limiting the issue of notes to a fixed amount of securities, requiring the whole of the further circulation to be on a basis of bullion, and prohibiting the formation of any new banks of issue, is a characteristic and an important measure of Peel's Government. To Peel, too, we owe the establishment of the income tax on its present basis—a doubtful boon. The copyright question was at least advanced a stage. Railways were regulated. The railway mania and railway panic also belong to this active period. The country went wild with railway speculation. The vulgar and flashy successes of one or two lucky adventurers turned the heads of the whole community. For a time it seemed to be a national article of faith that the capacity of the country to absorb new railway schemes and make them profitable was unlimited, and that to make a fortune one had only to take shares in anything.

An odd feature of the time was the outbreak of what were called the Rebecca riots in Wales. These riots arose out of the anger and impatience of the people at the great increase of toll-bars and tolls on the public roads. Some one, it was supposed, had hit upon a passage in Genesis which supplied a motto for their grievance and their complaint. "And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her . . . let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them." They set about accordingly to possess very effectually the gates of those which hated them. Mobs, led by men in women's clothes, assembled every night, destroyed turnpikes, and dispersed. Blood was shed in conflicts with police and soldiers. At last



the Government succeeded in putting down the riots, and had the wisdom to appoint a Commission to inquire into the cause of so much disturbance; and the Commission, as will readily be imagined, found that there were genuine grievances at the bottom of the popular excitement. The farmers and the labourers were poor; the tolls were seriously oppressive. The Government dealt lightly with most of the rioters who had been captured, and introduced measures which removed the most serious grievances.

Sir James Graham, the Home Secretary, brought himself and the Government into some trouble by authorising the Post Office to open some of the letters of Joseph Mazzini, the Italian exile. The public excitement was at first very great; but it soon subsided. The reports of Parliamentary committees appointed by the two Houses showed that all Governments had exercised the right, but naturally with decreasing frequency and greater caution of late years; and that there was no chance now of its being seriously abused. One remark it is right to make. An exile is sheltered in a country like England on the assumption that he does not involve her in responsibility and danger by using her protection as a shield behind which to contrive plots and organise insurrections against foreign Governments. It is certain that Mazzini did make use of the shelter England gave him for such a purpose. It would in the end be to the heavy injury of all fugitives from despotic rule if to shelter them brought such consequences on the countries that offered them a home.

The Peel Administration had wars of its own. Scinde was annexed by Lord Ellenborough in consequence of the disputes which had arisen between us and the Ameers,

whom we accused of having broken faith with us. Peel and his colleagues accepted the annexation. None of them liked it; but none saw how it could be undone. Later on the Sikhs invaded our territory by crossing the Sutlej in great force. Sir Hugh Gough, afterwards Lord Gough, fought several fierce battles with them before he could conquer them; and even then they were only conquered for the time.

We were at one moment apparently on the very verge of what must have proved a far more serious war much nearer home, in consequence of the dispute that arose between this country and France about Tahiti and Queen Pomare. Queen Pomare was sovereign of the island of Tahiti, in the South Pacific, the Otaheite of Captain Cook. She had been induced or compelled to put herself and her dominion under the protection of France; a step which was highly displeasing to her subjects. Some ill-feeling towards the French residents of the island was shown; and the French admiral, who had induced or compelled the queen to put herself under French protection, now suddenly appeared off the coast, and called on her to hoist the French flag above her own. She refused; and he instantly effected a landing on the island, pulled down her flag, raised that of France in its place, and proclaimed that the island was French territory. His act was at once disavowed by the French Government. But Queen Pomare had appealed to the Queen of England for assistance. While the more hot-headed on both sides of the English Channel were snarling at each other, the difficulty was immensely complicated by the French commandant's seizure of a missionary named Pritchard, who had been our consul in the island up to the deposition of Pomare. Pritchard was flung into prison, and only released to be expelled from the island. He came

home to England with his story; and his arrival was the signal for an outburst of indignation all over the country. In the end the French Government agreed to compensate Pritchard for his sufferings and losses. Queen Pomare was nominally restored to power, but the French protection proved as stringent as if it were a sovereign rule. She might as well have pulled down her flag for all the sovereign right it secured to her. She died thirty-four years after, and her death recalled to the memory of the English public the long-forgotten fact she had once so nearly been the cause of a war between England and France.

The Ashburton Treaty and the Oregon Treaty belong alike to the history of Peel's Administration. The Ashburton Treaty bears date August 9, 1842, and arranges finally the north-western boundary between the British Provinces of North America and the United States. More than once the dispute about the boundary line in the Oregon region had very nearly become an occasion for war between England and the United States. On June 15, 1846, the Oregon Treaty settled the question for that time at least. Vancouver's Island remained to Great Britain, and the free navigation of the Columbia River was secured. The question came up again for discussion in 1871, and was finally settled by the arbitration of the Emperor of Germany.

During Peel's time we catch a last glimpse of the famous Arctic navigator, Sir John Franklin. He sailed on the expedition which was doomed to be his last, on May 26, 1845, with his two vessels, *Erebus* and *Terror*. Not much more is heard of him as among the living.

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## CHAPTER VI.

## THE ANTI-CORN LAW LEAGUE.

THE famous Corn Law of 1815 was a copy of the Corn Law of 1670. The former measure imposed a duty on the importation of foreign grain which amounted to prohibition. Wheat might be exported upon the payment of one shilling per quarter Customs duty; but importation was practically prohibited until the price of wheat had reached eighty shillings a quarter. The Corn Law of 1815 was hurried through Parliament, absolutely closing the ports against the importation of foreign grain until the price of our home-grown grain had reached the magic figure of eighty shillings a quarter. It was hurried through, despite the most earnest petitions from the commercial and manufacturing classes. A great deal of popular disturbance attended the passing of the measure. There were riots in London, and in many parts of the country. After the Corn Law of 1815, thus ominously introduced, there were Sliding Scale Acts, having for their business to establish a varying system of duty, so that, according as the price of home-produced wheat rose to a certain height, the duty on imported wheat sank in proportion. The principle of all these measures was the same. It was founded on the assumption that the corn grew for the benefit of the grower first of all; and that until he had been secured in a handsome profit the public at large had no right to any reduction in the cost of food. When the harvest was a good one, and the golden grain was plenty, then the soul of the grower was afraid, and he called out to Parliament to protect him against the calamity of having to sell his corn any cheaper than in years of famine. He did not see all the

time that if the prosperity of the country in general was enhanced, he too must come to benefit by it.

A movement against the Corn Laws began in London. An Anti-Corn Law Association on a small scale was formed. Its list of members bore the names of more than twenty members of Parliament, and for a time the society had a look of vigour about it. It came to nothing, however. London has never been found an effective nursery of agitation. It has hardly ever made or represented thoroughly the public opinion of England during any great crisis. A new centre of operations had to be sought, and in the year 1838 a meeting was held in Manchester to consider measures necessary to be adopted for bringing about the complete repeal of the obnoxious Laws. The Manchester Chamber of Commerce adopted a petition to Parliament against the Corn Laws. The Anti-Corn Law agitation had been fairly launched. From that time it grew and grew in importance and strength. Meetings were held in various towns of England and Scotland. Associations were formed everywhere to co-operate with the movement which had its head-quarters in Manchester.

The nominal leader of the Free Trade party in Parliament was for many years Mr. Charles Villiers, a man of aristocratic family and surroundings, of remarkable ability, and of the steadiest fidelity to the cause he had undertaken. Mr. Villiers brought forward for several successive sessions in the House of Commons a motion in favour of the total repeal of the Corn Laws. His eloquence and argumentative power served the great purpose of drawing the attention of the country to the whole question, and making converts to the principle he advocated. But Mr. Villiers might have gone on for all his life dividing the House of Commons on the question

of Free Trade, without getting much nearer his object, if it were not for the manner in which the cause was taken up by the country, and more particularly by the great manufacturing towns of the North. Until the passing of Lord Grey's Reform Bill these towns had no representation in Parliament. They seemed destined after that event to make up for their long exclusion from representative influence by taking the government of the country into their own hands. Manchester, Birmingham, and Leeds are no whit less important to the life of the nation now than they were before Free Trade. But their supremacy does not exist now as it did then. At that time it was town against country; Manchester representing the town, and the whole Conservative (at one period almost the whole landowning) body representing the country. With the Manchester school, as it was called, began a new kind of popular agitation. Up to that time agitation meant appeal to passion, and lived by provoking passion. The Manchester school introduced the agitation which appealed to reason and argument only; which stirred men's hearts with figures of arithmetic rather than figures of speech, and which converted mob meetings to political economy.

The real leader of the movement was Mr. Richard Cobden. Mr. Cobden was a man belonging to the yeoman class. He had received but a moderate education. His father dying while the great Free Trader was still young, Richard Cobden was taken in charge by an uncle, who had a wholesale warehouse in the City of London, and who gave him employment there. Cobden afterwards became a partner in a Manchester printed cotton factory; and he travelled occasionally on the commercial business of this establishment. He had a great liking for travel; but not by any means as the ordinary tourist travels; the

interest of Cobden was not in scenery, or in art, or in ruins, but in men. He studied the condition of countries with a view to the manner in which it affected the men and women of the present, and through them was likely to affect the future. On everything that he saw he turned a quick and intelligent eye; and he saw for himself and thought for himself. Wherever he went, he wanted to learn something. He had in abundance that peculiar faculty which some great men of widely different stamp from him and from each other have possessed, the faculty which exacts from everyone with whom the owner comes into contact some contribution to his stock of information and to his advantage. Cobden could learn something from everybody. He travelled very widely, for a time when travelling was more difficult work than it is at present. He made himself familiar with most of the countries of Europe, with many parts of the East, and what was then a rarer accomplishment, with the United States and Canada. He studied these countries and visited many of them again to compare early with later impressions. When he was about thirty years of age he began to acquire a certain reputation as the author of pamphlets directed against some of the pet doctrines of old-fashioned statesmanship; the balance of power in Europe; the necessity of maintaining a State Church in Ireland; the importance of allowing no European quarrel to go on without England's intervention; and similar dogmas. The tongue, however, was his best weapon. If oratory were a business and not an art—that is, if its test were its success rather than its form—then it might be contended reasonably enough that Mr. Cobden was one of the greatest orators England has ever known. Nothing could exceed the persuasiveness of his style. His manner was simple, sweet and earnest. It was transparently sin-

cere. The light of its convictions shone all through it. It aimed at the reason and the judgment of the listener, and seemed to be convincing him to his own interest against his prejudices. Cobden's style was almost exclusively conversational, but he had a clear, well-toned voice, with a quiet, unassuming power in it which enabled him to make his words heard distinctly and without effort all through the great meetings he had often to address. His speeches were full of variety. He illustrated every argument by something drawn from his personal observation or from reading, and his illustrations were always striking, appropriate and interesting. He had a large amount of bright and winning humour, and he spoke the simplest and purest English. He never used an unnecessary sentence or failed for a single moment to make his meaning clear. Many strong opponents of Mr. Cobden's opinions confessed even during his lifetime that they sometimes found with dismay their most cherished convictions crumbling away beneath his flow of easy argument. In the stormy times of national passion Mr. Cobden was less powerful. The apostle of common sense and fair dealing, he had no sympathy with the passions of men; he did not understand them; they passed for nothing in his calculations. His judgment of men and of nations was based far too much on his own knowledge of his own motives and character. He knew that in any given case he could always trust himself to act the part of a just and prudent man; and he assumed that all the world could be governed by the rules of prudence and of equity. He cared little or nothing for mere sentiments. Even where these had their root in some human tendency that was noble in itself, he did not reverence them if they seemed to stand in the way of men's acting peacefully and prudently. Thus he never represented



seemingly of trade and those whom it employed. The artisan population who might have been formidable as a disturbing element were on the whole rather against the Free Traders than for them. Nearly all the great official leaders had to be converted to the doctrines of Free Trade.

The Anti-Corn Law agitation introduced a game of politics into England which astonished and considerably discomfited steady-going politicians. The League men did not profess to be bound by any indefeasible bond of allegiance to the Whig party. They were prepared to co-operate with any party whatever which would undertake to abolish the Corn Laws.

It is a significant fact that the Anti-Corn Law League were not in the least discouraged by the accession of Sir Robert Peel to power. Their hopes seem rather to have gone up than gone down when the minister came into power whose adherents, unlike those of Lord John Russell, were absolutely against the very principle of Free Trade. It is certain that the League always regarded Sir Robert Peel as a Free Trader in heart; as one who fully admitted the principle of Free Trade, but who did not see his way just then to deprive the agricultural interest of the protection on which they had for so many years been allowed and encouraged to lean.

The country party did not understand Sir Robert Peel as their opponents and his assuredly understood him. They did not at this time believe in the possibility of any change. Free Trade was to them little more than an abstraction. They did not much care who preached it out of Parliament. They were convinced that the state of things they saw around them when they were boys would continue to the end. Both parties in the House—that is to say, both of the parties from whom

ministers were taken—alike set themselves against the introduction of any Free Trade measure.

It would have been better if Sir Robert Peel had devoted himself more directly to preparing the minds of his followers for the fact that protection for grain having ceased to be tenable as an economic principle would possibly some day have to be given up as a practice. He might have been able to show them, as the events have shown them since, that the introduction of free corn would be a blessing to the population of England in general, and would do nothing but good for the landed interest as well. The influence of Peel at that time, and indeed all through his administration up to the introduction of his Free Trade measures, was limitless, so far as his party were concerned. He could have done anything with them. But Peel, to begin with, was a reserved, cold, somewhat awkward man. He was not effusive; he did not pour out his emotions and reveal all his changes of opinion in bursts of confidence even to his habitual associates. He brooded over these things in his own mind; he gave such expression to them in open debate as any passing occasion seemed strictly to call for; and he assumed perhaps that the gradual changes operating in his views when thus expressed were understood by his followers. Above all, it is probable that Peel himself did not see until almost the last moment that the time had actually come when the principle of Protection must give way to other and more weighty claims.

We see how the two great parties of the State stood with regard to this question of Free Trade. The Whigs were steadily gravitating towards it. Their leaders did not quite see their way to accept it as a principle of practical statesmanship, but it was evident that their acceptance of it was only a question of time, and of no

long time. The leader of the Tory party was being drawn day by day more in the same direction. Both leaders, Russell and Peel, had gone so far as to admit the general principle of Free Trade. Peel had contended that grain was in England a necessary exception; Russell was not of opinion that the time had come when it could be treated otherwise than as an exception. The Free Trade party was daily growing more and more powerful with the country. This must soon have ended in one or other of the two great ruling parties forming an alliance with the Free Traders. But in the case of the Anti-Corn Law agitation, an event over which political parties had no control intervened to spur the intent of the Prime Minister. Mr. Bright many years after, when pronouncing the eulogy of his dead friend Cobden, described what happened in a fine sentence: "Famine itself, against which we had warred, joined us." In the autumn of 1845 the potato rot began in Ireland.

The vast majority of the working population of Ireland were known to depend absolutely on the potato for subsistence. In the northern province, where the population were of Scotch extraction, the oatmeal, the brose of their ancestors, still supplied the staple of their food; but in the southern and western provinces a large proportion of the peasantry actually lived on the potato and the potato alone. In these districts whole generations grew up, lived, married, and passed away, without having ever tasted flesh meat. It was evident then that a failure in the potato crop would be equivalent to a famine. The news came in the autumn of 1845 that the long continuance of sunless wet and cold had imperilled, if not already destroyed, the food of a people.

The Cabinet of Sir Robert Peel held hasty meetings closely following each other. People began to ask whether

Parliament was about to be called together, and whether the Government had resolved on a bold policy. The Anti-Corn Law League were clamouring for the opening of the ports. The Prime Minister himself was strongly in favour of such a course. The Duke of Wellington and Lord Stanley, however, opposed the idea of the opening of the ports, and the proposal fell through. The Cabinet merely resolved on appointing a Commission, consisting of the heads of departments in Ireland, to take some steps to guard against a sudden outbreak of famine, and the thought of an autumnal session was abandoned.

The great cry all through Ireland was for the opening of the ports. The Mansion House Relief Committee of Dublin issued a series of resolutions declaring that the potato disease was daily expanding more and more, and the document concluded with a denunciation of the Ministry for not opening the ports, or calling Parliament together before the usual time for its assembling.

Two or three days after the issue of these resolutions Lord John Russell wrote a letter from Edinburgh to his constituents, the electors of the City of London, announcing his unqualified conversion to the principles of the Anti-Corn Law League. The failure of the potato crop was of course the immediate occasion of this letter. As Peel himself said, the letter "justified the conclusion that the Whig party was prepared to unite with the Anti-Corn Law League in demanding the total repeal of the Corn Laws." Peel would not consent now to propose simply an opening of the ports. It would seem, he thought, a mere submission to accept the minimum of the terms ordered by the Whig leader. Sir Robert Peel therefore recommended to his Cabinet an early meeting of Parliament with the view of bringing forward some measure equivalent to a speedy Repeal of the Corn Laws.

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The recommendation was wise. It was, indeed, indispensable. Yet neither Whigs nor Tories appear to have formed a judgment because of facts or principles, but only in deference to the political necessities of the hour. The potato rot inspired the writing of Lord John Russell's letter; and Lord John Russell's letter inspired Sir Robert Peel with the conviction that something must be done. Most of Peel's colleagues were inclined to go with him this time. A Cabinet Council was held on November 25, almost immediately after the publication of Lord John Russell's letter. At that council Sir Robert Peel recommended the summoning of Parliament with a view to instant measure to combat the famine in Ireland, but with a view also to some announcement of legislation intended to pave the way for the repeal of the Corn Laws. Lord Stanley and the Duke of Buccleuch intimated to the Prime Minister that they could not be parties to any measure involving the ultimate repeal of the Corn Laws. Sir Robert Peel did not believe that he could carry out his project satisfactorily under such circumstances, and he therefore hastened to tender his resignation to the Queen.

Lord John Russell was sent for from Edinburgh. His letter had without any such purpose on his part written him up as the man to take Sir Robert Peel's place. Lord John Russell came to London and did his best to cope with the many difficulties of the situation. His party were not very strong in the country, and they had not a majority in the House of Commons. Lord John Russell showed, even then, his characteristic courage. He resolved to form a Ministry without a Parliamentary majority. He was not however fated to try the ordeal. Lord Grey, who was a few months before Lord Howick, and who had just succeeded to the title of his father

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(the stately Charles Earl Grey, the pupil of Fox, and chief of the Cabinet which passed the Reform Bill and abolished slavery)—Lord Grey felt a strong objection to the foreign policy of Lord Palmerston, and these two could not get on in one Ministry as it was part of Lord John Russell's plan that they should do.

Lord John Russell found it impossible to form a Ministry. He signified his failure to the Queen. Probably, having done the best he could, he was not particularly distressed to find that his efforts were ineffectual. The Queen had to send for Sir Robert Peel to Windsor and tell him that she must require him to withdraw his resignation and to remain in her service. Sir Robert of course could only comply. The Duke of Buccleuch withdrew his opposition to the policy which Peel was now to carry out; but Lord Stanley remained firm. The place of the latter was taken, as Secretary of State for the Colonies, by Mr. Gladstone, who however curiously enough remained without a seat in Parliament during the eventful session that was now to come. Mr. Gladstone had sat for the borough of Newark, but that borough being under the influence of the Duke of Newcastle, who had withdrawn his support from the Ministry, he did not invite re-election, but remained without a seat in the House of Commons for some months. Sir Robert Peel then, to use his own words, resumed power "with greater means of rendering public service than I should have had if I had not relinquished it." He felt, he said, "like a man restored to life after his funeral sermon had been preached."

Parliament was summoned to meet in January. In the meantime it was easily seen how the Protectionists and the Tories of the extreme order generally would regard the proposals of Sir Robert Peel. Protectionist

meetings were held in various parts of the country, and they were all but unanimous in condemning by anticipation the policy of the restored Premier. Resolutions were passed at many of these meetings expressing an equal disbelief in the Prime Minister and in the famine. The utmost indignation was expressed at the idea of there being any famine in prospect which could cause any departure from the principles which secured to the farmers a certain fixed price for their grain, or at least prevented the price from falling below what they considered a paying amount.

Parliament met. The opening day was January 22, 1846. There are few scenes more animated and exciting than that presented by the House of Commons on some night when a great debate is expected, or when some momentous announcement is to be made. A common thrill seems to tremble all through the assembly as a breath of wind runs across the sea. The House appears for the moment to be one body pervaded by one expectation. The Ministerial benches, the front benches of opposition, are occupied by the men of political renown and of historic name. The benches everywhere else are crowded to their utmost capacity. Members who cannot get seats—on such an occasion a goodly number—stand below the bar or have to dispose themselves along the side galleries. The celebrities are not confined to the Treasury benches or those of the leaders of opposition. Here and there, among the independent members and below the gangway on both sides, are seen men of influence and renown. The strangers' gallery, the Speaker's gallery on such a night are crowded to excess. The eye surveys the whole House and sees no vacant place. In the very hum of conversation that runs along the benches there is a tone of profound anxiety. The minister who

has to face that House and make the announcement for which all are waiting in a most feverish anxiety is a man to be envied by the ambitious.

The Prime Minister went into long and laboured explanations of the manner in which his mind had been brought into a change on the subject of Free Trade and Protection, and he gave exhaustive calculations to show that the reduction of duty was constantly followed by expansion of the revenue, and even a maintenance of high prices. The duties on glass, the duties on flax, the prices of salt pork and domestic lard, the contract price of salt beef for the navy—these and many other such topics were discussed at great length, and with elaborate fulness of detail, in the hearing of an eager House anxious only for that night to know whether or not the minister meant to introduce the principle of Free Trade. Peel, however, made it clear enough that he had become a complete convert to the doctrines of the Manchester school, and that in his opinion the time had come when that protection he had taken office to maintain must for ever be abandoned.

The explanation was over. The House of Commons were left rather to infer than to understand what the Government proposed to do. There appeared therefore nothing for it but to wait until the time should come for the formal announcement and the full discussion of the Government measures. Suddenly, however, a new and striking figure intervened in the languishing debate, and filled the House of Commons with a fresh life. There is not often to be found in our Parliamentary history an example like this of a sudden turn given to a whole career by a timely speech. The member who rose to comment on the explanation of Sir Robert Peel had been for many years in the House of Commons. This was his



tenth session. He had spoken often in each session. He had made many bold attempts to win a name in Parliament, and hitherto his political career had been simply a failure. From the hour when he spoke this speech, it was one long, unbroken, brilliant success.

## CHAPTER VII.

### MR. DISRAELI.

THE speaker who rose into such sudden prominence and something like the position of a party leader was one of the most remarkable men the politics of the reign have produced. Mr. Disraeli entered the House of Commons as Conservative member for Maidstone in 1837. He was then about thirty-two years of age. He had previously made repeated and unsuccessful attempts to get a seat in Parliament. He began his political career as an advanced Liberal, and had described himself as one who desired to fight the battle of the people, and who was supported by neither of the aristocratic parties. He failed again and again, and apparently he began to think that it would be a wiser thing to look for the support of one or other of the aristocratic parties. He had before this given indications of remarkable literary capacity. His novel, "Vivian Grey," published when he was in his twenty-third year, was suffused with extravagance, affectation and mere animal spirits; but it was full of the evidences of a fresh and brilliant ability. The son of a distinguished literary man, Mr. Disraeli had probably at that time only a young literary man's notions of politics. It is not necessary to charge him with deliberate inconsistency because from having been a Radical of the most advanced views he became by an

easy leap a romantic Tory. It is not likely that at the beginning of his career he had any very clear ideas in connection with the words Tory or Radical. When young Disraeli found that advanced Radicalism did not do much to get him into Parliament, he probably began to ask himself whether his Liberal convictions were so deeply rooted as to call for the sacrifice of a career. He thought the question over, and doubtless found himself crystallising fast into an advocate of the established order of things.

No trace of the progress of conversion can be found in his speeches or his writings. It is not unreasonable to infer that he took up Radicalism at the beginning because it looked the most picturesque and romantic thing to do, and that only as he found it fail to answer his personal object did it occur to him that he had after all more affinity with the cause of the country gentlemen. The reputation he had made for himself before his going into Parliament was of a nature rather calculated to retard than to advance a political career. He was looked upon almost universally as an eccentric and audacious adventurer, who was kept from being dangerous by the affectations and absurdities of his conduct. He dressed in the extremest style of preposterous foppery; he talked a blending of cynicism and sentiment; he made the most reckless statements; his boasting was almost outrageous; his rhetoric of abuse was, even in that free-spoken time, astonishingly vigorous and unrestrained. Even then his literary efforts did not receive anything like the appreciation they have obtained since. At that time they were regarded rather as audacious whimsicalities, the fantastic freaks of a clever youth, than as genuine works of a certain kind of art. Even when he did get into the House of Commons, his first experience

there was little calculated to give him much hope of success. Reading over his first speech now, it seems hard to understand why it should have excited so much laughter and derision; why it should have called forth nothing but laughter and derision. It is a clever speech, full of point and odd conceits; very like in style and structure many of the speeches which in later years won for the same orator the applause of the House of Commons. But Mr. Disraeli's reputation had preceded him into the House. The House was probably in a humour to find the speech ridiculous because the general impression was that the man himself was ridiculous. Mr. Disraeli's appearance, too, no doubt contributed something to the contemptuous opinion which was formed of him on his first attempt to address the assembly which he afterwards came to rule. He is described by an observer as having been "attired in a bottle-green frock coat and a waistcoat of white, of the Dick Swiveller pattern, the front of which exhibited a network of glittering chains; large fancy pattern pantaloons, and a black tie, above which no shirt collar was visible, completed the outward man. A countenance lividly pale, set out by a pair of intensely black eyes, and a broad but not very high forehead, overhung by clustering ringlets of coal-black hair, which, combed away from the temple, fell in bunches of well-oiled small ringlets over his left cheek." His manner was intensely theatric; his gestures were wild and extravagant. Mr. Disraeli made not merely a failure, but even a ludicrous failure. One who heard the debate thus describes the manner in which, baffled by the persistent laughter and other interruptions of the noisy House, the orator withdrew from the discussion defeated but not discouraged. "At last, losing his temper, which until now he had preserved in

a wonderful manner, he paused in the midst of a sentence, and looking the Liberals indignantly in the face, raised his hands, and opening his mouth as widely as its dimensions would admit, said in a remarkably loud and almost terrific tone, 'I have begun several times many things, and I have often succeeded at last; ay, sir, and though I sit down now, the time will come when you will hear me.'

Disraeli was not in the least discouraged by his first failure. A few days after it he spoke again, and he spoke three or four times more during his first session. But he had earned some wisdom by rough experience, and he did not make his oratorical flights so long or so ambitious as that first attempt. Then he seemed after a while, as he grew more familiar with the House, to go in for being paradoxical; for making himself always conspicuous; for taking up positions and expounding political creeds which other men would have avoided. It is very difficult to get any clear idea of what his opinions were about this period of his career, if he had any political opinions at all. He spoke on subjects of which it was evident that he knew nothing, and sometimes he managed by the sheer force of a strong intelligence to discern the absurdity of economic sophistries which had baffled men of far greater experience, and which indeed, to judge from his personal declarations and political conduct afterwards, he allowed before long to baffle and bewilder himself. More often, however, he talked with a grandiose and oracular vagueness which seemed to imply that he alone of all men saw into the very heart of the question, but that he, of all men, must not yet reveal what he saw. Mr. Disraeli was at one period of his career so affected that he positively affected affectation. Yet he was a man of undoubted genius; he had

a spirit that never quailed under stress of any circumstances, however disheartening.

For some time Mr. Disraeli then seemed resolved to make himself remarkable—to be talked about. He succeeded admirably. He was talked about. All the political and satirical journals of the day had a great deal to say about him. He is not spoken of in terms of praise as a rule. Neither has he much praise to shower about him. Anyone who looks back to the political controversies of that time will be astounded at the language which Mr. Disraeli addresses to his opponents of the press, and which his opponents address to him. The duelling system survived then and for long after, and Mr. Disraeli always professed himself ready to sustain with his pistol anything that his lips might have given utterance to, even in the reckless heat of controversy. He kept himself well up to the level of his time in the calling of names and the swaggering. But he was making himself remarkable in political controversy as well. In the House of Commons he began to be regarded as a dangerous adversary in debate. He was wonderfully ready with retort and sarcasm. But during all the earlier part of his career he was thought of only as a free lance. He had praised Peel when Peel said something that suited him, or when to praise Peel seemed likely to wound someone else. But it was during the discussions on the abolition of the Corn Laws that he first rose to the fame of a great debater and a powerful Parliamentary orator.

Hitherto he had wanted a cause to inspire and justify audacity, and on which to employ with effect his remarkable resources of sarcasm and rhetoric. Hitherto he had addressed an audience for the most part out of sympathy with him. Now he was about to become the

spokesman of a large body of men who, chafing and almost choking with wrath, were not capable of speaking effectively for themselves. Mr. Disraeli did therefore the very wisest thing he could do when he launched at once into a savage personal attack upon Sir Robert Peel.

From that hour Mr. Disraeli was the real leader of the Tory squires; from that moment his voice gave the word of command to the Tory party. Disraeli made his own career by the course he took on that memorable night, and he also made a new career for the Tory party.

One immediate effect of the turn thus given by Disraeli's timely intervention in the debate was the formation of a Protection party in the House of Commons. The leadership of this perilous adventure was entrusted to Lord George Bentinck, a sporting nobleman of energetic character, great tenacity of purpose and conviction, and a not inconsiderable aptitude for politics which had hitherto had no opportunity for either exercising or displaying itself. Lord George Bentinck had sat in eight Parliaments without taking part in any great debate. When he was suddenly drawn into the leadership of the Protection party in the House of Commons, he gave himself up to it entirely. He had at first only joined the party as one of its organisers; but he showed himself in many respects well fitted for the leadership, and the choice of leaders was in any case very limited. When once he had accepted the position he was unwearied in his attention to its duties; and indeed up to the moment of his sudden and premature death he never allowed himself any relaxation from the cares it imposed on him. Bentinck's abilities were hardly even of the second class; and the amount of knowledge which

he brought to bear on the questions he discussed with so much earnestness and energy was often and of necessity little better than mere cram. But in Parliament the essential qualities of a leader are not great powers of intellect. A man of cool head, good temper, firm will, and capacity for appreciating the serviceable qualities of other men, may, always provided that he has high birth and great social influence, make a very successful leader, even though he be wanting altogether in the higher attributes of eloquence and statemanship. Bentinck had patience, energy, good humour, and considerable appreciation of the characters of men. If he had a bad voice, and was a poor speaker, he at least always spoke in full faith, and was only the more necessary to his party because he could honestly continue to believe in the old doctrines, no matter what political economy and hard facts might say to the contrary.

The secession was, therefore, in full course of organisation. On January 27 Sir Robert Peel came forward to explain his financial policy. His object was to abandon the sliding scale altogether; but for the present he intended to impose a duty of ten shillings a quarter on corn when the price of it was under forty-eight shillings a quarter; to reduce that duty by one shilling for every shilling of rise in price until it reached fifty-three shillings a quarter, when the duty should fall to four shillings. This arrangement was, however, only to hold good for three years, at the end of which time protective duties on grain were to be wholly abandoned. Peel explained that he intended gradually to apply the principle of Free Trade to manufactures and every description of produce, bearing in mind the necessity of providing for the expenditure of the country, and of smoothing away some of the difficulties which a sudden withdrawal

of protection might cause. The differential duties on sugar, which were professedly intended to protect the growers of free sugars against the competition of those who cultivated sugar by the use of slave labour, were to be diminished but not abolished. The duties on the importation of foreign cattle were to be at once removed.

The proposals of the Ministry did not wholly satisfy the professed Free Traders. These latter would have enforced, if they could, an immediate application of the principle without the interval of three years, and the devices and shifts which were to be put in operation during that middle time. But, of course, they had no idea of not taking what they could get.

The third reading of the bill passed the House of Commons on May 15, by a majority of 98 votes. The bill was at once sent up to the House of Lords, and by means chiefly of the earnest advice of the Duke of Wellington, was carried through that House without much serious opposition. But June 25, the day when the bill was read for a third time in the House of Lords, was a memorable day in the Parliamentary annals of England. It saw the fall of the Ministry who had carried to success the greatest piece of legislation that had been introduced since Lord Grey's Reform Bill.

A Coercion Bill for Ireland was the measure which brought this catastrophe on the Government of Sir Robert Peel. While the Corn Bill was yet passing through the House of Commons the Government felt called upon, in consequence of the condition of crime and outrage in Ireland, to introduce a Coercion Bill. This placed them in a serious difficulty. All the Irish followers of O'Connell would of course oppose the coercion measure. The Whigs when out of office have usually made it a rule to



oppose coercion bills if they do not come accompanied with some promises of legislative reform and concession. The English Radical members, Mr. Cobden and his followers, were almost sure to oppose it. Under these circumstances, it seemed probable enough that if the Protectionists joined with the other opponents of the Coercion Bill, the Government must be defeated. The temptation was too great. The fiercer Protectionists voted with the Free Traders, the Whigs, and the Irish Catholic and Liberal members, and after a debate of much bitterness and passion, the division on the second reading of the Coercion Bill took place on Thursday, June 25, and the Ministry were left in a minority of 73. Some eighty of the Protectionists followed Lord George Bentinck into the lobby to vote against the bill, and their votes settled the question. Chance had put within their grasp the means of vengeance, and they had seized it, and made successful use of it. The Peel Ministry had fallen in its very hour of triumph.

Three days after Sir Robert Peel announced his resignation of office. So great a success followed by so sudden and complete a fall is hardly recorded in the Parliamentary history of our modern times. Peel had crushed O'Connell and carried Free Trade, and O'Connell and the Protectionists had life enough yet to pull him down. He is as a conqueror who, having won the great victory of his life, is struck by a hostile hand in some by-way as he passes home to enjoy his triumph.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

## FAMINE AND POLITICAL TROUBLE.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL succeeded Sir Robert Peel as First Lord of the Treasury; Lord Palmerston became Foreign Secretary; Sir Charles Wood was Chancellor of the Exchequer; Lord Grey took charge of the Colonies; and Sir George Grey was Home Secretary. Mr. Macaulay accepted the office of Paymaster-General, with a seat in the Cabinet, a distinction not usually given to the occupant of that office. The Ministry was not particularly strong in administrative talent. The Premier and the Foreign Secretary were the only members of the Cabinet who could be called statesmen of the first class; and even Lord Palmerston had not as yet won more than a somewhat doubtful kind of fame, and was looked upon as a man quite as likely to do mischief as good to any Ministry of which he might happen to form a part. Lord Grey then and since only succeeded somehow in missing the career of a leading statesman. He had great talents and some originality; he was independent and bold. But his independence degenerated too often into impracticability and even eccentricity; and he was, in fact, a politician with whom ordinary men could not work. Sir Charles Wood, the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, had solid sense and excellent administrative capacity, but he was about as bad a public speaker as ever addressed the House of Commons. His budget speeches were often made so unintelligible by defective manner and delivery that they might almost as well have been spoken in a foreign language. Sir George Grey was a speaker of fearful fluency, and a respectable

administrator of the second or third class. He was as plodding in administration as he was precipitate of speech.

The position of the Government of Lord John Russell was not one to be envied. The Irish famine occupied all attention, and soon seemed to be an evil too great for any Ministry to deal with. The failure of the potato was an overwhelming disaster for a people almost wholly agricultural and a peasantry long accustomed to live upon that root alone. Ireland contains very few large towns; when the names of four or five are mentioned the list is done with, and we have to come to mere villages. The country has hardly any manufactures except that of linen in the northern province. In the south and west the people live by agriculture alone. The cottier system, which prevailed almost universally in three of the four provinces, was an arrangement by which a man obtained in return for his labour a right to cultivate a little patch of ground, just enough to supply him with food for the scanty maintenance of his family. The great landlords were for the most part absentees; the smaller landlords were often deeply in debt, and were therefore compelled to screw every possible penny of rent out of their tenants-at-will.

Underlying all the relations of landlord and tenant in Ireland were two great facts. The occupation of land was virtually a necessity of life to the Irish tenant. That is the first fact. The second is, that the land system under which Ireland was placed was one entirely foreign to the traditions, the ideas, one might say the very genius, of the Irish people. The Irish peasant regarded the right to have a bit of land, his share, exactly as other peoples regard the right to live. It was in his mind something elementary and self-evident. He could not be loyal to,

he could not even understand, any system which did not secure that to him.

The Irish peasant with his wife and his family lived on the potato. Not a county in Ireland wholly escaped the potato disease, and many of the southern and western counties were soon in actual famine. A peculiar form of fever—famine-fever it was called—began to show itself everywhere. A terrible dysentery set in as well. In some districts the people died in hundreds daily from fever, dysentery, or sheer starvation. It would have been impossible that in such a country as Ireland a famine of that gigantic kind should set in without bringing crimes of violence along with it. Unfortunately the Government had to show an immense activity in the introduction of Coercion Bills and other repressive measures.

Whatever might be said of the Government, no one could doubt the goodwill of the English people. National Relief Associations were especially formed in England. Relief indeed began to be poured in from all countries. The misery went on deepening and broadening. It was far too great to be effectually encountered by subscriptions however generous; and the Government, meaning to do the best they could, were practically at their wits' end. The starving peasants streamed into the nearest considerable town hoping for relief there, and found too often that there the very sources of charity were dried up. Many, very many, thus disappointed, merely lay down on the pavement and died there. Along the country roads one met everywhere groups of gaunt, dim-eyed wretches clad in miserable old sacking and wandering aimlessly with some vague idea of finding food, as the boy in the fable hoped to find the gold where the rainbow touched the earth. Many remained in their

empty hovels and took Death there when he came. In some regions the country seemed unpeopled for miles.

When the famine was over and its results came to be estimated, it was found that Ireland had lost about two millions of her population. She had come down from eight millions to six. This was the combined effect of starvation, of the various diseases that followed in its path gleaning where it had failed to gather, and of emigration. Long after all the direct effects of the failure of the potato had ceased, the population still continued steadily to decrease. The Irish peasant had in fact had his eyes turned, as Mr. Bright afterwards expressed it, towards the setting sun, and for long years the stream of emigration westward never abated in its volume. A new Ireland began to grow up across the Atlantic. In every great city of the United States the Irish element began to form a considerable constituent of the population.

The Government had hard work to do all this time. Lord George Bentinck was able to worry the Ministry somewhat effectively when they introduced a measure to reduce gradually the differential duties on sugar for a few years, and then replace these duties by a fixed and uniform rate. This was in short a proposal to apply the principle of Free Trade, instead of Protection, to sugar. Lord George Bentinck therefore proposed an amendment to the resolutions of the Government, declaring it unjust and impolitic to reduce the duty on foreign slave-grown sugar, as tending to check the advance of production by British free labour, and to give a great additional stimulus to slave labour. Many sincere and independent opponents of slavery, Lord Brougham in the House of Lords among them, were caught by this view of the question. Lord George and his brilliant lieutenant at one time appeared as if they were likely to carry their point in the

Commons. But it was announced that if the resolutions of the Government were defeated ministers would resign, and there was no one to take their place. Peel could not return to power; and the time was far distant yet when Mr. Disraeli could form a Ministry. The opposition crumbled away therefore, and the Government measures were carried.

There were troubles abroad as well as at home for the Government. Almost immediately on their coming into office, the project of the Spanish Marriages, concocted between King Louis Philippe and his minister, M. Guizot, disturbed for a time and very seriously the good understanding between England and France. In an evil hour for themselves and their fame, Louis Philippe and his minister believed that they could obtain a virtual ownership of Spain by an ingenious marriage scheme. There was at one time a project talked of rather than actually entertained, of marrying the young Queen of Spain and her sister to the Duc d'Aumale and the Duc de Montpensier, both sons of Louis Philippe. But this would have been too daring a venture on the part of the King of the French. Apart from any objections to be entertained by other States, it was certain that England could not "view with indifference," as the diplomatic phrase goes, the prospect of a son of the French King occupying the throne of Spain.

Louis Philippe knew very well that he could not venture to marry one of his sons to the young Isabella. But he and his minister devised a scheme for securing to themselves and their policy the same effect in another way. They contrived that the Queen and her sister should be married at the same time—the Queen to her cousin, Don Francisco d'Assis, Duke of Cadiz; and her sister to the Duke de Montpensier, Louis Philippe's son.

There was reason to expect that the Queen, if married to Don Francisco, would have no children, and that the wife of Louis Philippe's son, or some one of her children, would come to the throne of Spain.

This scheme proved a failure, so far as the objects of Louis Philippe and his minister were concerned. Queen Isabella had children; Montpensier's wife did not come to the throne; and the dynasty of Louis Philippe fell before long. But the friendship between England and France, from which so many happy results seemed likely to come to Europe, and the cause of free government, was necessarily interrupted for a time.

The year 1848 was an era in the modern history of Europe. It was the year of unfulfilled revolutions. The fall of the dynasty of Louis Philippe may be said to have set the revolutionary tide flowing.

Louis Philippe fled to England, and his flight was the signal for long pent-up fires to break out all over Europe. Revolution soon was aflame in nearly all the capitals of the Continent. Revolution is like an epidemic; it finds out the weak places in systems. The two European countries which being tried by it stood it best, were England and Belgium. In the latter country the King made frank appeal to his people, and told them that if they wished to be rid of him he was quite willing to go. Language of this kind was new in the mouths of sovereigns; and the Belgians were a people well able to appreciate it. They declared for their King and the shock of the revolution passed harmlessly away. In England and Ireland the effect of the events in France was instantly made manifest. The Chartist agitation, which had been much encouraged by the triumphant return of Feargus O'Connor for Nottingham at the general election of 1847, at once came to a head.

It was determined to present a monster petition to the House of Commons demanding the Charter, and in fact offering a last chance to Parliament to yield quietly to the demand. The petition was to be presented by a deputation who were to be conducted by a vast procession up to the doors of the House. The procession was to be formed on Kennington Common, the space then unenclosed which is now Kennington Park, on the south side of London. There the Chartists were to be addressed by their still trusted leader, Feargus O'Connor, and they were to march in military order to present their petition. The object undoubtedly was to make such a parade of physical force as should overawe the Legislature and the Government, and demonstrate the impossibility of refusing a demand backed by such a reserve of power. The proposed procession was declared illegal, and all peaceful and loyal subjects were warned not to take any part in it. But this was exactly what the more ardent among the Chartists expected and desired to see.

At a meeting of the Chartist Convention held the night before the demonstration, a considerable number were for going armed to Kennington Common. Feargus O'Connor had, however, sense enough still left to throw the weight of his influence against such an insane proceeding, and to insist that the demonstration must show itself to be, as it was from the first proclaimed to be, a strictly pacific proceeding. The more ardent spirits at once withdrew from the organisation. Those who might even at the very last have done mischief if they had remained part of the movement, withdrew from it; and Chartism was left to be represented by an open air meeting and a petition to Parliament, like all the other demonstrations that the metropolis had seen to pass, hardly heeded, across the field of politics. But the public at



large was not aware that the fangs of Chartism had been drawn before it was let loose to play on Kennington Common that memorable tenth of April. London awoke in great alarm that day. The wildest rumours were spread abroad in many parts of the metropolis. Long before the Chartists had got together on Kennington Common at all, various remote quarters of London were filled with horrifying reports of encounters between the insurgents and the police or the military, in which the Chartists invariably had the better, and as a result of which they were marching in full force to the particular district where the momentary panic prevailed. London is worse off than most cities in such a time of alarm. It is too large for true accounts of things rapidly to diffuse themselves. In April 1848, the street telegraph was not in use for carrying news through cities, and the rapidly succeeding editions of the cheap papers were as yet unknown. In various quarters of London, therefore, the citizen was left through the greater part of the day to all the agonies of doubt and uncertainty.

There was no lack, however, of public precautions against an outbreak of armed Chartism. The Duke of Wellington took charge of all the arrangements for guarding the public buildings and defending the metropolis generally. He acted with extreme caution, and told several influential persons that troops were in readiness everywhere, but that they would not be seen unless an occasion actually rose for calling on their services. The coolness and presence of mind of the stern old soldier are well illustrated in the fact that to several persons of influence and authority who came to him with suggestions for the defence of this place or that, his almost invariable answer was "Done already," or "Done two hours ago," or something of the kind. A vast number of Lon-

doners enrolled themselves as special constables for the maintenance of law and order. Nearly two hundred thousand persons, it is said, were sworn in for this purpose; and it will always be told as an odd incident of that famous scare, that the Prince Louis Napoleon, then living in London, was one of those who volunteered to bear arms in the preservation of order. Not a long time was to pass away before the most lawless outrage on the order and life of a peaceful city was to be perpetrated by the special command of the man who was so ready to lend the saving aid of his constable's staff to protect English society against some poor hundreds or thousands of English working men.

The crisis, however, luckily proved not to stand in need of such saviours of society. The Chartist demonstration was a wretched failure. The meeting on Kennington Common, so far from being a gathering of half a million of men, was not a larger |concourse than a temperance demonstration had often drawn together on the same spot. The procession was not formed, O'Connor himself strongly insisting on obedience to the orders of the authorities. The great Chartist petition itself, which was to have made so profound an impression on the House of Commons, proved as utter a failure as the demonstration on Kennington Common. It was made certain that the number of genuine signatures was ridiculously below the estimate formed by the Chartist leaders; and the agitation, after terrifying respectability for a long time, suddenly showed itself a thing only to be laughed at.

Here comes not inappropriately to an end the history of English Chartism. It died of publicity; of exposure to the air; of the Anti-Corn Law League; of the evident tendency of the time to settle all questions by reason, argument, and majorities; of growing education; of a

strengthening sense of duty among all the more influential classes. All that was sound in its claims asserted itself and was in time conceded. But its active or aggressive influence ceased with 1848. Not since that year has there been any serious talk or thought of any agitation asserting its claims by the use or even display of armed force in England.

The spirit of the time had meanwhile made itself felt in a different way in Ireland. For some months before the beginning of the year the Young Ireland party had been established as a rival association to the Repealers who still believed in the policy of O'Connell. The *Nation* newspaper was conducted and written for by some rising young men of high culture and remarkable talent. It was inspired in the beginning by at least one genuine poet, Mr. Thomas Davis, who unfortunately died in his youth. The Young Ireland party had received a new support by the adhesion of Mr. William Smith O'Brien to their ranks. Mr. O'Brien was a man of considerable influence in Ireland. He had a large property and high rank. He was connected with or related to many aristocratic families. His brother was Lord Inchiquin; the title of the Marquisate of Thomond was in the family. He was undoubtedly descended from the famous Irish hero and king Brian Boru, and was inordinately proud of his claims of long descent. He had the highest personal character and the finest sense of honour; but his capacity for leadership of any movement was very slender. His adhesion to the cause of Young Ireland gave the movement a decided impulse. His rank, his legendary descent, his undoubted chivalry of character and purity of purpose lent a romantic interest to his appearance as the recognised leader, or at least the figure-head, of the Young Irishmen.

Smith O'Brien was a man of more mature years than most of his companions in the movement. He was some forty-three or four years of age when he took the leadership of the movement. Thomas Francis Meagher, the most brilliant orator of the party, a man who under other conditions might have risen to great distinction in public life, was then only about two or three-and-twenty. Mitchel and Duffy, who were regarded as elders among the Young Irelanders, were perhaps each some thirty years of age.

Before the death of O'Connell the formal secession of the Young Ireland party from the regular Repealers had taken place. The Continental revolutions of the year 1848 suddenly converted the movement from a literary and poetical organisation into a rebellious conspiracy. The fever of that wild epoch spread itself at once over Ireland. In the meantime a fresh and a stronger influence than that of O'Brien or Meagher had arisen in Young Irelandism. Young Ireland itself now split into two sections, one for immediate action, the other for caution and delay. The party of action acknowledged the leadership of John Mitchel. The organ of this section was the newspaper started by Mitchel in opposition to the *Nation*, which had grown too slow for him. The new journal was called the *United Irishman*, and in a short time completely distanced the *Nation* in popularity and in circulation. The deliberate policy of the *United Irishman* was to force the hand first of the Government and then of the Irish people. Mitchel had made up his mind so to rouse the passion of the people as to compel the Government to take steps for the prevention of rebellion by the arrest of some of the leaders. Then Mitchel calculated upon the populace rising to defend or rescue their heroes—and then the game would be afoot; Ire-

land would be entered in rebellion; and the rest would be for fate to decide.

The Government brought in a bill for the better security of the Crown and Government, making all written incitement to insurrection or resistance to the law, felony punishable with transportation. This measure was passed rapidly through all its stages. It enabled the Government to suppress newspapers like the *United Irishman*, and to keep in prison without bail, while awaiting trial, anyone charged with an offence under the new Act. Mitchel soon gave the authorities an opportunity of testing the efficacy of the Act in his person. He repeated his incitements to insurrection, was arrested and thrown into prison. The climax of the excitement in Ireland was reached when Mitchel's trial came on. There can be little doubt that he was filled with a strong hope that his followers would attempt to rescue him. Had there been another Mitchel out of doors, as fearless and reckless as the Mitchel in the prison, a sanguinary outbreak would probably have taken place. But the leaders of the movement outside were by no means clear in their own minds as to the course they ought to pursue. They discouraged any idea of an attempt to rescue Mitchel. His trial came on. He was found guilty. He made a short but powerful and impassioned speech from the dock; he was sentenced to fourteen years' transportation; he was hurried under an escort of cavalry through the streets of Dublin, put on board a ship of war, and in a few hours was on his way to Bermuda. Dublin remained perfectly quiet; the country outside hardly knew what was happening until Mitchel was well on his way, and far-seeing persons smiled to themselves and said the danger was over.

So indeed it proved to be. The Government suspended the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland, and issued warrants

for the arrest of Smith O'Brien, Meagher, and other confederate leaders. Smith O'Brien, Meagher, Dillon, and others left Dublin and went down into the country. They held a series of gatherings which might be described as meetings of agitators or marshallings of rebels, according as one was pleased to interpret their purpose. But this sort of thing very soon drifted into rebellion. The principal body of the followers of Smith O'Brien came into collision with the police at a place called Ballingarry, in Tipperary. The police fired a few volleys. The rebels fired, with what wretched muskets and rifles they possessed, but without harming a single policeman. After a few of their number had been killed or wounded—it never was perfectly certain that any were actually killed—the rebel band dispersed, and the rebellion was all over.

Smith O'Brien, Meagher, and some of their companions were arrested. The prisoners were brought for trial before a special commission held at Clonmel, in Tipperary, in the following September. Smith O'Brien was the first put on trial, and was found guilty. He was sentenced to death after the old form in cases of high treason—to be hanged, beheaded, and quartered. Meagher was afterwards found guilty, and sentenced to death with the same hideous formalities. No one, however, really believed for a moment that such a sentence was likely to be carried out in the reign of Queen Victoria. The sentence of death was changed into one of transportation for life. The convicts were all sent to Australia, and a few years after Meagher contrived to make his escape. He was soon followed by Mitchel. Smith O'Brien himself afterwards received a pardon on condition of his not returning to these islands; but this condition was withdrawn after a time, and he came back to Ireland. He

died quietly in Wales in 1864. Mitchel settled for a while in Richmond, Virginia, and became an ardent advocate of slavery and an impassioned champion of the Southern rebellion. He returned to the North after the rebellion, and more lately came to Ireland, where, owing to some defect in the criminal law, he could not be arrested, his time of penal servitude having expired although he had not served it. He was still a hero with many of the people; he was put up as a candidate for an Irish county and elected. He was not allowed to enter the House of Commons, however; the election was declared void, and a new writ was issued. He was elected again, and some turmoil was expected, when suddenly Mitchel, who had long been in sinking health, was withdrawn from the controversy by death. Meagher served in the army of the Federal States when the war broke out, and showed much of the soldier's spirit and capacity. His end was premature and inglorious. He fell from the deck of a steamer one night; it was dark and there was a strong current running; help came too late. A false step, a dark night, and the muddy waters of the Missouri closed the career that had opened with so much promise of brightness.

Many of the conspicuous Young Irelanders rose to some distinction. Charles Gavan Duffy, the editor of the *Nation*, who was twice put on his trial after the failure of the insurrection, but whom a jury would not on either occasion convict, became a member of the House of Commons, and afterwards emigrated to the colony of Victoria. He rose to be Prime Minister there, and received knighthood from the Crown, and a pension from the Colonial Parliament. Thomas Darcy M'Gee, another prominent rebel, went to the United States, and thence to Canada, where he rose to be a minister of the Crown.

He was one of the most loyal supporters of the British connection. His untimely death by the hand of an assassin was lamented in England as well as in the colony he had served so well.

## CHAPTER IX.

## ATHENS, ROME, AND LONDON.

THE name of Don Pacifico was familiar to the world some quarter of a century ago as that of the man whose quarrel had nearly brought on a European war, had caused a temporary disturbance of good relations between England and France, split up political parties in England in a manner hardly ever known before, and established the reputation of Lord Palmerston as one of the greatest Parliamentary debaters of his time.

Don Pacifico was a Jew, a Portuguese by extraction, but a native of Gibraltar and a British subject living in Athens. It had been customary in Greek towns to celebrate Easter by burning an effigy of Judas Iscariot. In 1847 the police of Athens were ordered to prevent this performance, and the mob, disappointed of their favourite amusement, ascribed the new orders to the influence of the Jews. Don Pacifico's house happened to stand near the spot where the Judas was annually burnt; Don Pacifico was known to be a Jew; and the anger of the mob was wreaked upon him accordingly. Don Pacifico made a claim against the Greek Government for compensation for nearly thirty-two thousand pounds sterling. Another claim was made at the same time by another British subject, a man of a very different stamp from Don Pacifico. This was Mr. Finlay, the historian of Greece. Mr. Finlay had settled in Athens when the independence of



Greece had been established. Some of his land had been taken for the purpose of rounding off the new palace gardens of King Otho; and Mr. Finlay had declined to accept the terms offered by the Greek Government, to which other landowners in the same position as himself had assented.

None of these questions would seem at first sight to wear a very grave international character. Unluckily Lord Palmerston became possessed with the idea that the French minister in Greece was secretly setting the Greek Government on to resist our claims. For the Foreign Office had made the claims ours, and insisted that Greece must pay up within a given time or take the consequences. Greece hesitated, and accordingly the British fleet was sent to the Piræus, and seized all the Greek vessels belonging to the Government and to private merchants that were found within the waters.

The Greek Government appealed to France and Russia as powers joined with us in the treaty to protect the independence of Greece. France and Russia were both disposed to make bitter complaint of not having been consulted in the first instance by the British Government; nor was their feeling greatly softened by Lord Palmerston's peremptory reply that it was all a question between England and Greece, with which no other power had any business to interfere. At last something like a friendly arbitration was accepted from France, and the French Government sent a special representative to Athens to try to come to terms with our minister there. The difficulties appeared likely to be adjusted. But some spirit of mischief seemed to have this unlucky affair in charge from the first. A new quarrel threatened at one time to break out between England and France. The

French Government actually withdrew their ambassador, M. Drouyn de Lhuys, from London; and there was for a short time a general alarm over Europe. But after a while our Government gave way, and agreed to an arrangement which was in the main all that France desired. When, after a long lapse of time, the arbitrators came to settle the claims of Don Pacifico, it was found that he was entitled to about one-thirtieth of the sum he had originally demanded. Don Pacifico, it seems, charged in his bill one hundred and fifty pounds sterling for a bedstead, thirty pounds for the sheets of the bed, twenty-five pounds for two coverlets, and ten pounds for a pillow-case. The jewellery of his wife and daughters he estimated at two thousand pounds. It seems too that he had always lived in a humble sort of way, and was never supposed by his neighbours to possess such splendour of ornament and household goods.

While the controversy between the English and French Governments was yet unfinished, Lord Stanley proposed in the House of Lords a resolution which was practically a vote of censure on the Government. The resolution was carried, after a debate of great spirit and energy, by a majority of thirty-seven. Lord Palmerston was not dismayed. A Ministry is seldom greatly troubled by an adverse vote in the House of Lords. Still it was necessary that something should be done in the Commons to counterbalance the stroke of the Lords, and accordingly Mr. Roebuck, acting as an independent member, although on this occasion in harmony with the Government, brought forward on June 24, 1850, a resolution which boldly affirmed that the principles on which the foreign policy of the Government had been regulated were "such as were calculated to maintain the honour and dignity of this country; and in times of unexampled difficulty to

preserve peace between England and the various nations of the world."

Among those who condemned the policy of Lord Palmerston were Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Cobden, Sir Robert Peel, Sir William Molesworth, and Mr. Sidney Herbert in the Commons. In the House of Lords, Lord Brougham, Lord Canning, and Lord Aberdeen had supported the resolution of Lord Stanley. The principal interest of the debate now rests in the manner of Lord Palmerston's defence. That speech was indeed a masterpiece of Parliamentary argument and address. Lord Palmerston really made it appear as if the question between him and his opponents was that of the protection of Englishmen abroad; as if he were anxious to look after their lives and safety, while his opponents were urging the odious principle that when once an Englishman put his foot on a foreign shore his own Government renounced all intent to concern themselves with any fate that might befall him. In a peroration of thrilling power Lord Palmerston asked for the verdict of the House to decide "whether, as the Roman in days of old held himself free from indignity when he could say 'I am a Roman citizen,' so also a British subject, in whatever land he may be, shall feel confident that the watchful eye and the strong arm of England will protect him against injustice and wrong." When Lord Palmerston closed his speech the overwhelming plaudits of the House foretold the victory he had won. It was indeed a masterpiece of telling defence. The speech occupied some five hours in delivery. It was spoken, as Mr. Gladstone afterwards said, from the dusk of one day to the dawn of the next. It was spoken without the help of a single note.

After a debate of four nights, a majority of forty-six was given for the resolution. The Ministry came out not

only absolved but triumphant. The odd thing about the whole proceeding is that the ministers in general heartily disapproved of the sort of policy which Palmerston defended so eloquently and put so energetically into action—at least they disapproved, if not his principles, yet certainly his way of enforcing them. Of many fine speeches made during this brilliant debate we must notice one in particular. It was that of Mr. Cockburn, then member for Southampton. Never in our time has a reputation been more suddenly, completely, and deservedly made than Mr. Cockburn won by his brilliant display of ingenious argument and stirring words. The manner of the speaker lent additional effect to his clever and captivating eloquence. He had a clear, sweet, penetrating voice, a fluency that seemed so easy as to make listeners sometimes fancy that it ought to cost no effort, and a grace of gesture such as it must be owned the courts of law where he had his training do not often teach. Mr. Cockburn defended the policy of Palmerston with an effect only inferior to that produced by Palmerston's own speech, and with a rhetorical grace and finish to which Palmerston made no pretension. Mr. Cockburn's career was safe from that hour. It is needless to say that he well upheld in after years the reputation he won in a night. The brilliant and sudden success of the member for Southampton was but the fitting prelude to the abiding distinction won by the Lord Chief Justice of England.

One association of profound melancholy clings to that great debate. The speech delivered by Sir Robert Peel was the last that was destined to come from his lips. The debate closed on the morning of Saturday, June 29. It was nearly four o'clock when the division was taken,

and Peel left the House as the sunlight was already beginning to stream into corridors and lobbies. He went home to rest; but his sleep could not be long. He had to attend a meeting of the Royal Commissioners of the Great Industrial Exhibition at twelve. He returned home for a short time after the meeting, and then set out for a ride in the Park. He called at Buckingham Palace and wrote his name in the Queen's visiting-book. Then as he was riding up Constitution Hill he stopped to talk to a young lady, a friend of his, who was also riding. His horse suddenly shied and flung him off; and Peel clinging to the bridle, the animal fell with its knees on his shoulders. The injuries which he received proved beyond all skill of surgery. He lingered, now conscious, now delirious with pain, for two or three days; and he died about eleven o'clock on the night of July 2. Most of the members of his family and some of his dearest old friends and companions in political arms were beside him when he died. The tears of the Duke of Wellington in one House of Parliament, and the eloquence of Mr. Gladstone in the other, were expressions as fitting and adequate as might be of the universal feeling of the nation.

Peel seemed destined for great things yet when he died. He was but in his sixty-third year; he was some years younger than Lord Palmerston, who may be said without exaggeration to have just achieved his first great success. Many circumstances were pointing to Peel as likely before long to be summoned again to the leadership in the government of the country. It is superfluous to say that his faculties as Parliamentary orator or statesman were not showing any signs of decay. An English public man is not supposed to show signs of decaying

faculties at sixty-two. The shying horse and perhaps the bad ridership settled the question of Peel's career between them.

To the same year belongs the close of another remarkable career. On August 26, 1850, Louis Philippe, lately King of the French, died at Claremont, the guest of England. Few men in history had gone through greater reverses. He had been soldier, exile, college teacher, wanderer among American-Indian tribes, resident of Philadelphia, and of Bloomingdale in the New York suburbs, and King of the French. He died in exile among us, a clever, unwise, grand, mean old man. There was a great deal about him which made him respected in private life, and when he had nothing to do with state intrigues and the foreign policy of courts. He was much liked in England, where his sons lived for many years after. But there were Englishmen who did not like him and did not readily forgive him. One of these was Lord Palmerston. Louis Philippe always detested Lord Palmerston. Lord Palmerston wrote to his brother a few days after the death of Louis Philippe, expressing his sentiments thereupon with the utmost directness. "The death of Louis Philippe," he said, "delivers me from my most artful and inveterate enemy, whose position gave him in many ways the power to injure me."

The autumn of 1850 and the greater part of 1851 were disturbed by a sharp and embittered struggle with the Papal court. The movement among some scholarly, mystical men in England towards the Roman Church had made a profound impression in Rome. To the eyes of Papal enthusiasm the whole English nation was only waiting for some word in season to return to the spiritual jurisdiction of Rome. A Papal bull, "given at St. Peter's, Rome, under the seal of the fisherman," directed the

establishment in England "of a hierarchy of bishops deriving their titles from their own sees, which we constitute by the present letter in the various apostolic districts." There always were Catholic bishops in England. There were Catholic archbishops. They were free to go and come, to preach and teach as they liked; to dress as they liked; for all that nineteen out of every twenty Englishmen cared, they might have been also free to call themselves what they liked. The anger was not against the giving of the new titles, but against the assumption of a new right to give titles representing territorial distinctions in the country; against the Pope's evident assumption that the change he was making was the natural result of an actual change in the national feeling of England. The Pope had divided England into various dioceses, which he placed under the control of an archbishop and twelve suffragans; and the new archbishop was Cardinal Wiseman. Under the title of Archbishop of Westminster and Administrator Apostolic of the Diocese Southwark, Cardinal Wiseman was now to reside in London. Cardinal Wiseman was already well known in England. He was of English descent on his father's side and of Irish on his mother's; he was a Spaniard by birth, and a Roman by education. His family on both sides was of good position; his father came of a long line of Essex gentry. Wiseman had held the professorship of Oriental languages in the English College at Rome, and afterwards became rector of the college. In 1840 he was appointed by the Pope one of the Vicars Apostolic in England, and held his position here as Bishop of Melipotamus *in partibus infidelium*. He was well known to be a fine scholar, an accomplished linguist, and a powerful preacher and controversialist. But he was believed also to be a man of great ecclesias-

tical ambition—ambition for his Church, that is to say—of singular boldness, and of much political ability. The Pope's action was set down as in a great measure the work of Wiseman. The Cardinal himself was accepted in the minds of most Englishmen as a type of the regular Italian ecclesiastic—bold, clever, ambitious, and unscrupulous. The very fact of his English extraction only militated the more against him in the public feeling. He was regarded as in some sense one who had gone over to the enemy, and who was the more to be dreaded because of the knowledge he carried with him. The first step taken by Cardinal Wiseman did not tend to charm away this feeling. He issued a pastoral letter, addressed to England, on October 7, 1850, which was set forth as “given out of the Flaminian Gate of Rome.” This description of the letter was afterwards stated to be in accordance with one of the necessary formularies of the Church of Rome; but it was then assumed in England to be an expression of insolence and audacity intended to remind the English people that from out of Rome itself came the assertion of supremacy over them. This letter was to be read publicly in all the Roman Catholic churches in London. It addressed itself directly to the English people, and it announced that “your beloved country has received a place among the fair churches which normally constituted form the splendid aggregate of Catholic communion; Catholic England has been restored to its orbit in the ecclesiastical firmament from which its light had long vanished; and begins now anew its course of regularly-adjusted action round the centre of unity, the source of jurisdiction, of light, and of vigour.”

The letter had hardly reached England when the country was aroused by another letter coming from a



very different quarter, and intended as a counterblast to the Papal assumption of authority. This was Lord John Russell's famous Durham letter. The letter was in reply to one from the Bishop of Durham, and was dated "Downing Street, November 4." Lord John Russell condemned in the most unmeasured terms the assumption of the Pope as "a pretension of supremacy over the realm of England, and a claim to sole and undivided sway, which is inconsistent with the Queen's supremacy, with the rights of our bishops and clergy, and with the spiritual independence of the nation as asserted even in the Roman Catholic times." But Lord John Russell went further than all this. He declared that there was a danger that alarmed him more than any aggression from a foreign sovereign, and that was "the danger within the gates from the unworthy sons of the Church of England herself." The Catholics looked upon the letter as a declaration of war against Catholicism; the fanatical of the other side welcomed it as a trumpet-call to a new "No Popery" agitation.

The very day after the letter appeared was the Guy Faux anniversary. All over the country the effigies of the Pope and Cardinal Wiseman took the place of the regulation "Guy," and were paraded and burnt amid tumultuous demonstrations. Mr. Disraeli endeavoured at once to foment the prevailing heat of public temper and at the same time to direct its fervour against the Ministry themselves, by declaring in a published letter that he could hardly blame the Pope for supposing himself at liberty to divide England into bishoprics, seeing the encouragement he had got from the ministers themselves by the recognition they had offered to the Roman Catholic hierarchy of Ireland. As a matter of fact it was not the existing Government that had recognised the rank of

the Irish Catholic prelates. The recognition had been formally arranged in January 1845 by a royal warrant or commission for carrying out the Charitable Bequests Act, which gave the Irish Catholic prelates rank immediately after the prelates of the Established Church of the same degree. But the letter of Mr. Disraeli, like that of John Russell, served to inflame passions on both sides, and to put the country in the worst possible mood for any manner of wholesome legislation. Never during the same generation had there been such an outburst of anger on both sides of the religious controversy. It was a curious incident in political history that Lord John Russell, who had more than any Englishman then living been identified with the principles of religious liberty, who had sat at the feet of Fox, and had for his closest friend the Catholic poet Thomas Moore, came to be regarded by Roman Catholics as the bitterest enemy of their creed and their rights of worship.

The opening of Parliament came on February 4, 1851. The Ministry had to do something. No Ministry that ever held power in England could have attempted to meet the House of Commons without some project of a measure to allay the intense excitement which prevailed throughout the country. Two or three days after the meeting of Parliament Lord John Russell introduced his bill to prevent the assumption by Roman Catholics of titles taken from any territory or place within the United Kingdom. The measure proposed to prohibit the use of all such titles under penalty, and to render void all acts done by or bequests made to persons under such titles. The Roman Catholic Relief Act imposed a penalty of one hundred pounds for every assumption of a title taken from an existing see. Lord John Russell proposed now to extend the penalty to the assumption of any title

whatever from any place in the United Kingdom. The reception which was given to Lord John Russell's motion for leave to bring in this bill was not encouraging. Usually leave to bring in a bill is granted as a matter of course. Some few general observations of extemporaneous and guarded criticism are often made; but the common practice is to offer no opposition. On this occasion, however, the debate on the motion for leave to bring in the bill was renewed for night after night, and the fullest promise of an angry and prolonged resistance was given. The opponents of the measure had on their side not only all the prominent champions of religious liberty like Sir James Graham, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Cobden, and Mr. Bright; but also Protestant politicians of such devotion to the interests of the Church as Mr. Roundell Palmer, afterwards Lord Selborne, and Mr. Beresford Hope; and of course they had with them all the Irish Catholic members. Mr. Roebuck described the bill as "one of the meanest, pettiest, and most futile measures that ever disgraced even bigotry itself." Mr. Bright called it "little, paltry, and miserable—a mere sham to bolster up Church ascendancy." Mr. Disraeli declared that he would not oppose the introduction of the bill; but he spoke of it in language of as much contempt as Mr. Roebuck and Mr. Bright had used, calling it a mere piece of petty persecution. Sir Robert Inglis, on the part of the more extreme Protestants, objected to the bill on the ground that it did not go far enough. Yet so strong was the feeling in favour of some legislation, that when the division was taken, three hundred and ninety-five votes were given for the motion, and only sixty-three against it.

It was interrupted at one stage by events which had nothing to do with its history. The Government got into

trouble of another kind. Mr. Locke King, member for East Surrey, asked for leave to bring in a bill to assimilate the county franchise to that existing in boroughs. Lord John Russell opposed the motion, and the Government were defeated by 100 votes against 52. It was evident that this was only what is called a "snap" vote; that the House was taken by surprise, and that the result in no wise represented the general feeling of Parliament. But still it was a vexatious occurrence for the Ministry. Their budget had already been received with very general marks of dissatisfaction. The Chancellor of the Exchequer only proposed a partial and qualified repeal of the window tax, an impost which was justly detested, and he continued the income tax. Under these circumstances Lord John Russell felt that he had no alternative but to tender his resignation to the Queen. Leaving his Ecclesiastical Titles Bill suspended in air, he announced that he could no longer think of carrying on the government of the country.

The question was who should succeed him. The Queen sent for Lord Stanley, afterwards Lord Derby. Lord Stanley offered to do his best to form a Government, but he tried without hope, and of course he was unsuccessful. The position of parties was very peculiar. It was impossible to form any combination which could really agree upon anything. There were three parties out of which a Ministry might be formed. These were the Whigs, the Conservatives, and the Peelites. The Peelites were a very rising and promising body of men. Among them were Sir James Graham, Lord Canning, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Sidney Herbert, Mr. Cardwell, and some others almost equally well known. Only these three groups were fairly in the competition for office; for the idea of a Ministry of Radicals and Manchester men was

not then likely to present itself to any official mind. But how could anyone put together a Ministry formed from a combination of these three? The Peelites would not coalesce with the Tories because of the Protection question, and because of Lord Stanley's own declaration that he still regarded the policy of Free Trade as only an experiment. The Peelites would not combine with the Whigs because of the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill. The Conservatives would not disavow protective ideas; the Whigs would not give up the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill. No statesman, therefore, could form a Government without having to count on two great parties being against him on one question or the other. There was nothing better to be done than to ask the ministers who had resigned to resume their places and muddle on as they best could. It is not enough to say that there was nothing better to be done: there was nothing else to be done. They were at all events still administering the affairs of the country, and no one would relieve them of the task. So the ministers returned to their places and resumed the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill.

The Government at first, as we have seen, resolved to impose a penalty on the assumption of ecclesiastical titles by Roman Catholic prelates from places in the United Kingdom, and to make null and void all acts done or bequests made in virtue of such titles. But they found that it would be absolutely impossible to apply such legislation in Ireland. In that country a Catholic hierarchy had long been tolerated, and all the functions of a regular hierarchy had been in full and formal operation. To apply the new measure to Ireland would have been virtually to repeal the Roman Catholic Relief Act and restore the penal laws. On the other hand, the ministers were not willing to make one law against titles for Eng-

land and another for Ireland. They were driven, therefore, to the course of withdrawing two of the stringent clauses of the bill, and leaving it little more than a mere declaration against the assumption of unlawful titles. But by doing this they furnished stronger reasons for opposition to both of the two very different parties who had hitherto denounced their way of dealing with the crisis. Those who thought the bill did not go far enough before were of course indignant at the proposal to shear it of whatever little force it had originally possessed. They, on the other hand, who had opposed it as a breach of the principle of religious liberty could now ridicule it with all the greater effect on the ground that it violated a principle without even the pretext of doing any practical good as a compensation.

The debates were long, fierce, and often passionate. The bill was wrangled over until the end of June, and then a large number, some seventy, of the Irish Catholic members publicly seceded from the discussion and announced that they would take no further part in the divisions. On this some of the strongest opponents of the Papal aggression, led by Sir Frederick Thesiger, afterwards Lord Chelmsford, brought in and carried a series of resolutions intended to make the bill more stringent than it had been even as originally introduced. The object of the resolutions was principally to give the power of prosecuting and claiming a penalty to anybody, provided he obtained the consent of the law officers of the Crown, and to make penal the introduction of bulls. When the measure came on for a third reading, Lord John Russell moved the omission of the added clauses, but he was defeated by large majorities. The bill was done with so far as the House of Commons was concerned. After an eloquent and powerful protest from

Mr. Gladstone against the measure, as one disparaging to the great principle of religious freedom, the bill was read a third time. It went up to the House of Lords, was passed there without alteration although not without opposition, and soon after received the Royal assent.

This was practically the last the world heard about it. In the Roman Church everything went on as before. The new Cardinal Archbishop still called himself Archbishop of Westminster; some of the Irish prelates made a point of ostentatiously using their territorial titles in letters addressed to the ministers themselves. The bitterness of feeling which the Papal aggression and the legislation against it had called up did not indeed pass away very soon. It broke out again and again, sometimes in the form of very serious riot. But England was not restored to the communion of the Roman Catholic Church. On the other hand, the Ecclesiastical Titles Act was never put in force. Nobody troubled about it. Many years after, in 1871, it was quietly repealed. It died in such obscurity that the outer public hardly knew whether it was above ground or below.

The first of May, 1851, will always be memorable as the day on which the Great Exhibition was opened in Hyde Park. Golden indeed were the expectations with which hopeful people welcomed that historic Exhibition. It was the first organised to gather all the representatives of the world's industry into one great fair; and there were those who seriously expected that men who had once been prevailed upon to meet together in friendly and peaceful rivalry would never again be persuaded to meet in rivalry of a fiercer kind. The Hyde Park Exhibition was often described as the festival to open the long reign of Peace. It might as a mere matter of chronology be called without any impropriety the festival

to celebrate the close of the short reign of Peace. From that year, 1851, it may be said fairly enough that the world has hardly known a week of peace. The *coup d'état* in France closed the year. The Crimean War began almost immediately after and was followed by the Indian Mutiny, and that by the war between France and Austria, the long civil war in the United States, the Neapolitan enterprises of Garibaldi, and the Mexican intervention, until we come to the war between Austria, Prussia, and Denmark; the short sharp struggle for German supremacy between Austria and Prussia, the war between France and Germany, the war between Russia and Turkey, and our own Asiatic and African wars. Such were, in brief summary, the events that quickly followed the great inaugurating Festival of Peace in 1851.

The first idea of the Exhibition was conceived by Prince Albert; and it was his energy and influence which succeeded in carrying the idea into practical execution. Prince Albert was President of the Society of Arts, and this position secured him a platform for the effective promulgation of his ideas. On June 30, 1849, he called a meeting of the Society of Arts at Buckingham Palace. He proposed that the Society should undertake the initiative in the promotion of an exhibition of the works of all nations. The idea was at once taken up by the Society of Arts, and by their agency spread abroad. In the first few days of 1850 a formal Commission was appointed "for the promotion of the Exhibition of the Works of All Nations, to be holden in the year 1851." Prince Albert was appointed President of the Commission.

On March 21 in the same year the Lord Mayor of London gave a banquet at the Mansion House to the



chief magistrates of the cities, towns, and boroughs of the United Kingdom, for the purpose of inviting their co-operation in support of the undertaking. Prince Albert was present and spoke. He had cultivated the art of speaking with much success, and had almost entirely overcome whatever difficulty stood in his way from his foreign birth and education. He never quite lost his foreign accent. But his style of speaking was clear, thoughtful, stately, and sometimes even noble. It exactly suited its purpose. It was that of a man who did not set up for an orator; and who, when he spoke, wished that his ideas rather than his words should impress his hearers. At the dinner in the Mansion House he spoke with great clearness and grace of the purposes of the Great Exhibition. It was, he said, to "give the world a true test, a living picture, of the point of industrial development at which the whole of mankind has arrived, and a new starting-point from which all nations will be able to direct their further exertions."

It must not be supposed, however, that the project of the Great Exhibition advanced wholly without opposition. Many persons were disposed to sneer at it altogether; many were sceptical about its doing any particular good; not a few still regarded Prince Albert as a foreigner and a pedant, and were exceedingly slow to believe that anything really practical was likely to be developed under his impulse and protection. After some consideration the Royal Commissioners had fixed upon Hyde Park as the best site for the great building, and many energetic and some influential voices were raised in fierce outcry against what was called the profanation of the park. It was argued that the public use of Hyde Park would be destroyed by the Exhibition; that the Park would be utterly spoiled; that its beauty could never be restored.

A petition was presented by Lord Campbell to the House of Lords against the occupation of any part of Hyde Park with the Exhibition building. Lord Brougham supported the petition with his characteristic impetuosity and vehemence, and denounced the House of Lords for what he considered its servile deference to royalty in the matter of the Exhibition and its site. It is probably true enough that only the influence of a prince could have carried the scheme to success against the storms of opposition that began to blow at various periods and from different points. Many times during its progress the Prince himself trembled for the success of his scheme. Many a time he must have felt inclined to renounce it, or at least to regret that he had ever taken it up.

Absurd as the opposition to the scheme may now seem, it is certain that a great many sensible persons thought the moment singularly inopportune for the gathering of large crowds, and were satisfied that some inconvenient, if not dangerous, public demonstrations must be provoked. The smouldering embers of Chartism, they said, where everywhere under society's feet. The crowds of foreigners would, some people said, naturally include large numbers of the "Reds" of all Continental nations, who would be only too glad to coalesce with Chartism and discontent of all kinds, for the purpose of disturbing the peace of London. The agitation caused by the Papal aggression was still in full force and flame. Most of the Continental sovereigns looked coldly on the undertaking. The King of Prussia took such alarm at the thought of the Red Republicans whom the Exhibition would draw together, that at first he positively prohibited his brother, then Prince of Prussia, now German Emperor, from attending the opening ceremonial; and though he

afterwards withdrew the prohibition, he remained full of doubts and fears as to the personal safety of any royal or princely personage found in Hyde Park on the opening day. The Duke of Cambridge being appealed to on the subject, acknowledged himself also full of apprehensions. The objections to the site continued to grow up to a certain time, but public opinion gradually underwent a change, and the opposition to the site was defeated in the House of Commons by a large majority.

Even, however, when the question of the site had been disposed of, there remained immense difficulties in the way. The press was not on the whole very favourable to the project. As the time for the opening drew near, some of the foreign diplomatists in London began to sulk at the whole project. There were small points of objection made about the position and functions of foreign ambassadors at the opening ceremonial, and up to the last moment it was not quite certain whether an absurd diplomatic quarrel might not have been part of the inaugural ceremonies of the opening day.

The Prince did not despair, however, and the project went on. There was a great deal of difficulty in selecting a plan for the building. Huge structures of brickwork, looking like enormous railway sheds, costly and hideous at once, were proposed; it seemed almost certain that some one of them must be chosen. Happily, a sudden inspiration struck Mr. (afterwards Sir Joseph) Paxton. Why not try glass and iron? he asked himself. Why not build a palace of glass and iron large enough to cover all the intended contents of the Exhibition, and which should be at once light, beautiful, and cheap? Mr. Paxton sketched out his plan hastily; the idea was eagerly accepted by the Royal Commissioners, and the palace of glass and iron arose within the specified time

on the green turf of Hyde Park. The idea so happily hit upon was serviceable in more ways than one to the success of the Exhibition. It made the building itself as much an object of curiosity and wonder as the collections under its crystal roof. Of the hundreds of thousands who came to the Exhibition a goodly proportion were drawn to Hyde Park rather by a wish to see Paxton's palace of glass than all the wonders of industrial and plastic art that it enclosed.

The success of the opening day was indeed undoubted. There were nearly thirty thousand people gathered together within the building, and nearly three-quarters of a million of persons lined the way between the Exhibition and Buckingham Palace; and yet no accident whatever occurred, nor had the police any trouble imposed on them by the conduct of anybody in the crowd. It is needless to say that there were no hostile demonstrations by Red Republicans or malignant Chartists or infuriated Irish Catholics. The one thing which especially struck foreign observers, and to which many eloquent pens and tongues bore witness, was the orderly conduct of the people. Nor did the subsequent history of the Exhibition in any way belie the promise of its opening day. It continued to attract delighted crowds to the last, and more than once held within its precincts at one moment nearly a hundred thousand persons, a concourse large enough to have made the population of a respectable Continental capital. The Hyde Park enterprise bequeathed nothing very tangible or distinct to the world, except indeed the palace which, built out of its fabric, not its ruins, so gracefully ornaments one of the soft hills of Sydenham. But in a year made memorable by many political events of the greatest importance, of disturbed and tempestuous politics abroad

and at home, of the deaths of many illustrious men, and the failure of many splendid hopes, the Exhibition in Hyde Park still holds its place in memory—not for what it brought or accomplished, but simply for itself, its surroundings, and its house of glass.

## CHAPTER X.

### PALMERSTON.

THE death of Sir Robert Peel had left Lord Palmerston the most prominent, if not actually the most influential, among the statesmen of England. Palmerston's was a strenuous self-asserting character. He had given himself up to the study of foreign affairs as no minister of his time had done. He had a peculiar capacity for understanding foreign politics and people as well as foreign languages; and he had come somewhat to pique himself upon his knowledge. His sympathies were markedly liberal. In all the popular movements going on throughout the Continent Palmerston's sympathies were generally with the peoples and against the Governments; while he had, on the other hand, a very strong contempt, which he took no pains to conceal, even for the very best class of the Continental demagogue. Palmerston seized a conclusion at once, and hardly ever departed from it. He never seemed to care who knew what he thought on any subject. He had a contempt for men of more deliberate temper, and often spoke and wrote as if he thought a man slow in forming an opinion must needs be a dull man, not to say a fool. All opinions not his own he held in good-humoured scorn. In some of his letters we find him writing of men of the most undoubted genius and wisdom, whose views have since

stood all the test of time and trial, as if they were mere blockheads for whom no practical man could feel the slightest respect. It would be almost superfluous to say, in describing a man of such a nature, that Lord Palmerston sometimes fancied he saw great wisdom and force of character in men for whom neither then nor since did the world in general show much regard. As with a man, so with a cause, Lord Palmerston was to all appearance capricious in his sympathies. Calmer and more earnest minds were sometimes offended at what seemed a lack of deep-seated principle in his mind and his policy, even when it happened that he and they were in accord as to the course that ought to be pursued. His levity often shocked them; his blunt, brusque ways of speaking and writing sometimes gave downright offence.

Lord Palmerston was unsparing in his lectures to foreign states. He was always admonishing them that they ought to lose no time in at once adopting the principles of government which prevailed in England. While therefore he was a Conservative in home politics, and never even professed the slightest personal interest in any projects of political reform in England, he got the credit all over the Continent of being a supporter, promoter, and patron of all manner of revolutionary movements, and a disturber of the relations between subjects and their sovereigns. Palmerston, therefore, had many enemies among European statesmen. It is now certain that the Queen frequently winced under the expressions of ill-feeling which were brought to her ears as affecting England, and, as she supposed, herself, and which she believed to have been drawn on her by the inconsiderate and impulsive conduct of Palmerston. The Prince Consort, on whose advice the Queen very naturally relied, was a man of singularly calm and earnest nature. He

liked to form his opinions deliberately and slowly, and disliked expressing any opinion until his mind was well made up. Lord Palmerston, when Secretary for Foreign Affairs, was much in the habit of writing and answering despatches on the spur of the moment, and without consulting either the Queen or his colleagues. Palmerston complained of the long delays which took place on several occasions when, in matters of urgent importance, he waited to submit despatches to the Queen before sending them off. He contended too that where the general policy of state was clearly marked out and well known, it would have been idle to insist that a Foreign Secretary capable of performing the duties of his office should wait to submit for the inspection and approval of the Sovereign and his colleagues every scrap of paper he wrote on before it was allowed to leave England. But the Queen complained that on matters concerning the actual policy of the State Palmerston was in the habit of acting on his own independent judgment and authority; that she found herself more than once thus pledged to a course of policy which she had not had an opportunity of considering, and would not have approved if she had had such an opportunity; and that she hardly ever found any question absolutely intact and uncompromised when it was submitted to her judgment.

The Queen and the Prince had long chafed under Lord Palmerston's cavalier way of doing business. So far back as 1849 her Majesty had felt obliged to draw the attention of the Foreign Secretary to the fact that his office was constitutionally under the control of the Prime Minister, and the despatches to be submitted for her approval should, therefore, pass through the hands of Lord John Russell. Lord John Russell approved of this arrangement, only suggesting—and the suggestion is of

some moment in considering Lord Palmerston's defence of his conduct afterwards—that every facility should be given for the transaction of business by the Queen's attending to the draft despatches as soon as possible after their arrival. The Queen accepted the suggestion good-humouredly, only pleading that she should “not be pressed for an answer within a few minutes, as is done now sometimes.” One can see a part of the difficulty at least even from these slight hints. Lord Palmerston was rapid in forming his judgments as in all his proceedings, and when once he had made up his mind was impatient of any delay which seemed to him superfluous. Prince Albert was slow, deliberate, reflective, and methodical. Lord Palmerston was always sure he was right in every judgment he formed, even if it were adopted on the spur of the moment; Prince Albert loved reconsideration and was open to new argument and late conviction. However, the difficulty was got over in 1849. Lord Palmerston agreed to every suggestion, and for the time all seemed likely to go smoothly. It was only for the time. The Queen soon believed she had reason to complain that the new arrangement was not carried out. Things were going on, she thought, in just the old way. Lord Palmerston dealt as before with foreign courts according to what seemed best to him at the moment; and his Sovereign and his colleagues often only knew of some important despatch or instruction when the thing was done and could not be conveniently or becomingly undone. The Prince, at her Majesty's request, wrote to Lord John Russell, complaining strongly of the conduct of Lord Palmerston. An important memorandum was addressed by her Majesty to the Prime Minister, laying down in clear and severe language the exact rules by which the Foreign Secretary must be bound in his dealings with



her. The memorandum was a severe and a galling rebuke for the Foreign Secretary. We can imagine with what emotions Lord Palmerston must have received it. He was a proud, self-confident man; and it came on him just in the moment of his *Pacifico* triumph. But he kept down his feelings. It is impossible not to feel a high respect for the manner in which Lord Palmerston acted. He took his rebuke in the most perfect good temper. He wrote a friendly and good-humoured letter to Lord John Russell, saying, "I have taken a copy of this memorandum of the Queen, and will not fail to attend to the directions which it contains." Lord Palmerston went a step farther in the way of conciliation. He asked for an interview with Prince Albert, and he explained to the Prince in the most emphatic and indignant terms that the accusation against him of being purposely wanting in respect to the Sovereign was absolutely unfounded. But he does not seem in the course of the interview to have done much more than argue the point as to the propriety and convenience of the system he had lately been adopting in the business of the Foreign Office. So for the hour the matter dropped. But it was destined to come up again in more serious form than before.

About this time the Hungarians had been making a desperate attempt to throw off the domination of Austria and assert their independence. The struggle had begun over some questions of constitutional rights involved in the connection between Hungary and Austria, but it grew into a regular rebellion, having for its aim the complete freedom of Hungary. For a time it carried all before it, but it was finally crushed by the intervention of Russia. This intervention of Russia called up a wide and deep feeling of regret and indignation in this country. Louis Kossuth, who had been dictator of Hungary

during the greater part of the insurrection, and who represented, in the English mind at least, the cause of Hungary and her national independence, came to England, and the English public welcomed him with especial cordiality. There was much in Kossuth himself as well as in his cause to attract the enthusiasm of popular assemblages. He had a strikingly handsome face and a stately presence. He was picturesque and perhaps even theatric in his dress and his bearing. He looked like a picture; all his attitudes and gestures seemed as if they were meant to be reproduced by a painter. He was undoubtedly one of the most eloquent men who ever addressed an English popular audience. In one of his imprisonments Kossuth had studied the English language chiefly from the pages of Shakespeare. The English he spoke was the noblest in its style from which a student could supply his eloquence: Kossuth spoke the English of Shakespeare. Through all his speeches there ran the thread of one distinct principle of international policy to which Kossuth endeavoured to obtain the assent of the English people. This was the principle that if one State intervenes in the domestic affairs of another for the purpose of putting down revolution, it then becomes the right, and may even be the duty, of any third State to throw in the weight of her sword against the unjustifiable intervention. As a principle this is nothing more than some of the ablest and most thoughtful Englishmen had advocated before and have advocated since. But in Kossuth's mind, and in the understanding of those who heard him, it meant that England ought to declare war against Russia or Austria, or both; the former for having intervened between the Emperor of Austria and the Hungarians, and the latter for having invited and profited by the intervention.

The presence of Kossuth and the reception he got excited a wild anger and alarm among Austrian statesmen. The Austrian Ambassador in England was all sensitiveness and remonstrance. The relations between this country and Austria seemed to become every day more and more strained. Lord Palmerston regarded the anger and the fears of Austria with a contempt which he took no pains to conceal. Lord Palmerston knew that the English public never had any serious notion of going to war with Austria in obedience to Kossuth's appeal. There came a time when Kossuth lived in England forgotten and unnoticed; when his passing away from England was unobserved as his presence there long had been. The English crowds who applauded Kossuth at first meant nothing more than general sympathy with any hero of Continental revolution, and personal admiration for the eloquence of the man who addressed them. But Kossuth did not thus accept the homage paid to him. No foreigner could have understood it in his place. Lord Palmerston understood it thoroughly, and knew what it meant, and how long it would last.

- Some of Lord Palmerston's colleagues, however, became greatly alarmed when it was reported that the Foreign Minister was about to receive a visit from Kossuth in person to thank him for the sympathy and protection which England had accorded to the Hungarian refugees while they were still in Turkey, and without which it is only too likely that they would have been handed over to Austria or Russia. If Kossuth were received by Lord Palmerston, the Austrian ambassador, it was confidently reported, would leave England. Lord John Russell took alarm, and called a meeting of the Cabinet to consider the momentous question. Lord Palmerston reluctantly consented to appease the alarms of

his colleagues by promising to avoid an interview with Kossuth. The hoped-for result, that of sparing the sensibilities of the Austrian Government, was not attained. In fact, things turned out a great deal worse than they might have done if the interview between Lord Palmerston and Kossuth had been quietly allowed to come off. Meetings were held to express sympathy with Kossuth, and addresses were voted to Lord Palmerston thanking him for the influence he had exerted in preventing the surrender of Kossuth to Austria. Lord Palmerston consented to receive these addresses from the hands of deputations at the Foreign Office. The whole proceeding considerably alarmed some of Lord Palmerston's colleagues, and was regarded with distinct displeasure by the Queen and Prince Albert. But the possible indiscretion of Lord Palmerston's dealings with a deputation or two from Finsbury and Islington became a matter of little interest when the country was called upon to consider the propriety of the Foreign Secretary's dealings with the new ruler of a new state system, with the author of the *coup d'état*.

Things had been going rather strangely in France. After the fall of Louis Philippe a republic had been set up, and it had received the support of a young man whom we last saw playing the part of special constable against the Chartists, the Prince Louis Napoleon. Louis Napoleon was a nephew of the great Emperor. He had made attempts to get on the throne of France before, and been imprisoned and escaped, and taken refuge in England. Louis Napoleon had lived many years in England. He was as well known there as any prominent member of the English aristocracy. He went a good deal into very various society, literary, artistic, merely fashionable, purely rowdy, as well as into that political

society which might have seemed natural to him. In all circles the same opinion appears to have been formed of him. From the astute Lord Palmerston to the most ignorant of the horse-jockeys with whom he occasionally consorted, all who met him seemed to think of the Prince in much the same way. It was agreed on all hands that he was a fatuous, dreamy, moony, impracticable, stupid young man. A sort of stolid amiability, not enlightened enough to keep him out of low company and questionable conduct, appeared to be his principal characteristic. He constantly talked of his expected accession somehow and some time to the throne of France, and people only smiled pityingly at him. When the republic was fairly established he went over to France, gave it his support, and succeeded in being elected its president. Then he plotted to overthrow it. He won the army to his side. On the second of December, 1851, he seized and imprisoned all his political opponents; the next day he bore down with the most savage violence all possible opposition. Paris was in the hands of his soldiers; hundreds of helpless people were slaughtered, the streets of Paris ran with blood; Louis Napoleon proclaimed himself Prince President. This was the *coup d'état*.

The news of the *coup d'état* took England by surprise. A shock went through the whole country. The almost universal voice of popular opinion condemned it as strongly as nearly all men of genuine enlightenment and feeling condemned it then and since. The Queen was particularly anxious that nothing should be said by the British ambassador to commit us to any approval of what had been done. On December 4 the Queen wrote to Lord John Russell from Osborne, expressing her desire that Lord Normanby, our ambassador at Paris, should be instructed to remain entirely passive, and say no word

that might be misconstrued into approval of the action of the Prince President. Lord Normanby's reply to this despatch created a startling sensation. Our ambassador wrote to say that when he called on the French Minister for Foreign Affairs to inform him that he had been instructed by her Majesty's Government not to make any change in his relations with the French Government, the Minister, M. Turgot, told him that he had heard two days before from Count Walewski, the French ambassador in London, that Lord Palmerston had expressed to him his entire approval of what Louis Napoleon had done, and his conviction that the Prince President could not have acted otherwise. It would not be easy to exaggerate the sensation produced among Lord Palmerston's colleagues by this astounding piece of news. The Queen wrote at once to Lord John Russell, asking him if he knew anything about the approval which "the French Government pretend to have received;" declaring that she could not "believe in the truth of the assertion, as such an approval given by Lord Palmerston would have been in complete contradiction to the line of strict neutrality and passiveness which the Queen had expressed her desire to see followed with regard to the late convulsions at Paris." Lord John Russell replied that he had written to Lord Palmerston, "saying that he presumed there was no truth in the report." The reply of Lord Palmerston left no doubt that Lord Palmerston had expressed to Count Walewski his approval of the *coup d'état*.

Lord Palmerston endeavoured to draw a distinction between the expressions of a Foreign Secretary in conversation with an ambassador, and a formal declaration of opinion. But it is clear that the French ambassador did not understand Lord Palmerston to be merely in-

dulging in the irresponsible gossip of private life, and that Lord Palmerston never said a word to impress him with the belief that their conversation had that colourless and unmeaning character. In any case it was surely a piece of singular indiscretion on the part of a Foreign Minister to give the French ambassador, even in private conversation, an unqualified opinion in favour of a stroke of policy of which the British Government as a whole, and indeed with the one exception of Lord Palmerston, entirely disapproved. Lord John Russell made up his mind. He came to the conclusion that he could no longer go on with Lord Palmerston as a colleague in the Foreign Office. The quarrel was complete; Lord Palmerston ceased from that time to be Foreign Secretary, and his place was taken by Lord Granville. Seldom has a greater sensation been produced by the removal of a minister. The effect which was created all over Europe was probably just what Lord Palmerston would have desired; the belief prevailed everywhere that he had been sacrificed to the monarchical and reactionary influences all over the Continent. The statesmen of Europe were under the impression that Lord Palmerston was put out of office as an evidence that England was about to withdraw from her former attitude of sympathy with the popular movements of the Continent.

The meeting of Parliament took place on February 3 following, 1852. It would be superfluous to say the keenest anxiety was felt to know the full reason of the sudden dismissal. The House of Commons was not long left to wait for an explanation. Lord John Russell made a long speech, in which he went into the whole history of the differences between Lord Palmerston and his colleagues; and, what was more surprising to the House, into a history of the late Foreign Secretary's dif-

ferences with his Sovereign, and the threat of dismissal which had so long been hanging over his head. The Prime Minister read to the House the Queen's memorandum. Lord John Russell's speech was a great success. Lord Palmerston's was, even in the estimation of his closest friends, a failure. Palmerston seemed to have practically no defence. He only went over again the points put by him in the correspondence already noticed; contended that on the whole he had judged rightly of the French crisis, and that he could not help forming an opinion on it, and so forth. Of the Queen's memorandum he said nothing. He made up his mind that a dispute between a sovereign and a subject would be unbecoming of both; and he passed over the memorandum in deliberate silence. The almost universal opinion of the House of Commons and of the clubs was that Lord Palmerston's career was closed. "Palmerston is smashed!" was the common saying of the clubs. A night or two after the debate Lord Dalling met Mr. Disraeli on the staircase of the Russian Embassy, and Disraeli remarked to him that "there was a Palmerston." Lord Palmerston evidently did not think so. The letters he wrote to friends immediately after his fall show him as jaunty and full of confidence as ever. He was quite satisfied with the way things had gone. He waited calmly for what he called, a few days afterwards, "My tit-for-tat with John Russell," which came about indeed sooner than even he himself could well have expected.

All through the year 1852 the national mind of England was disturbed. The country was stirring itself in quite an unusual manner, in order that it might be ready for a possible and even an anticipated invasion from France. The Volunteer movement sprang into sudden existence. All over the country corps of young volunteers



were being formed. An immense amount of national enthusiasm accompanied and acclaimed the formation of the volunteer army, which received the sanction of the Crown early in the year, and thus became a national institution. The meaning of all this movement was explained by the steady progress of the Prince President of France to an imperial throne. The previous year had closed upon his *coup d'état*. He had arrested, imprisoned, banished, or shot his principal enemies, and had demanded from the French people a Presidency for ten years, a Ministry responsible to the executive power—himself alone—and two political Chambers to be elected by universal suffrage. Nearly five hundred prisoners, untried before any tribunal, even that of a drum-head, had been shipped off to Cayenne. The streets of Paris had been soaked in blood. The President instituted a *plébiscite*, or vote of the whole people, and of course he got all he asked for. There was no arguing with the commander of twenty legions, and of such legions as those that had operated with terrible efficiency on the Boulevards. The Bonapartist Empire was restored. The President became Emperor, and Prince Louis Napoleon was Napoleon the Third.

It would have been impossible that the English people could view all this without emotion and alarm. They could not see with indifference the rise of a new Napoleon to power. The one special characteristic of the Napoleonic principle was its hostility to England. The life of the great Napoleon in its greatest days had been devoted to the one purpose of humiliating England. His plans had been foiled by England. He owed his fall principally to England. He died a prisoner of England, and with his hatred of her embittered rather than appeased. It did not seem possible that a new Emperor

Napoleon could arise without bringing a restoration of that hatred along with him. An invasion of England was not a likely event. But it was not by any means an impossible event. The more composedly one looks back to it now, the more he will be compelled to admit that it was at least on the cards. The feeling of national uneasiness and alarm was not a mere panic. There were five projects with which public opinion all over Europe specially credited Louis Napoleon when he began his imperial reign. One was a war with Russia. Another was a war with Austria. A third was a war with Prussia. A fourth was the annexation of Belgium. The fifth was the invasion of England. Three of these projects were carried out. The fourth we know was in contemplation. Our combination with France in the first project probably put all serious thought of the fifth out of the head of the French Emperor. He got far more prestige out of an alliance with us than he could ever have got out of any quarrel with us; and he had little or no risk. But we need not look upon the mood of England in 1852 as one of idle and baseless panic. The same feeling broke into life again in 1859, when the Emperor of the French suddenly announced his determination to go to war with Austria. It was in this latter period indeed that the Volunteer movement became a great national organisation. But in 1852 the beginning of an army of volunteers was made; and what is of more importance to the immediate business of our history, the Government determined to bring in a bill for the reorganisation of the national militia.

Our militia was not in any case a body to be particularly proud of at that time. It had fallen into decay, and almost into disorganisation. Nothing could have been a more proper work for any Government than its

restoration to efficiency and respectability. We had on our hands at the time one of our little wars—a Caffre war, which was protracted to a vexatious length, and which was not without serious military difficulty. It began in the December of 1850, and was not completely disposed of before the early part of 1853. We could not afford to have our defences in any defective condition. But it was an unfortunate characteristic of Lord John Russell's Government that it attempted so much legislation, not because some particular scheme commended itself to the mature wisdom of the Ministry, but because something had to be done in a hurry to satisfy public opinion; and the Government could not think of anything better at the moment than the first scheme that came to hand. Lord John Russell accordingly introduced a Militia Bill, which was in the highest degree inadequate and unsatisfactory. The principal peculiarity of it was that it proposed to substitute a local militia for the regular force that had been in existence. Lord Palmerston saw great objections to this alteration, and urged them with much briskness and skill on the night when Lord John Russell explained his measure. When Palmerston began his speech, he probably intended to be merely critical as regarded points in the measure which were susceptible of amendment; but as he went on he found more and more that he had the House with him. Every objection he made, every criticism he urged, almost every sentence he spoke, drew down increasing cheers. Lord Palmerston saw that the House was not only thoroughly with him on this ground, but thoroughly against the Government on various grounds. A few nights after he followed up his first success by proposing a resolution to substitute the word "regular" for the word "local" in the bill; thus, in fact, to reconstruct the

bill on an entirely different principle from that adopted by its framer. The effort was successful. The Peelites went with Palmerston; the Protectionists followed him as well; and the result was that 136 votes were given for the amendment, and only 125 against it. The Government were defeated by a majority of eleven. Lord John Russell instantly announced that he could no longer continue in office, as he did not possess the confidence of the country. The announcement took the House by surprise. Palmerston did not expect any such result, he declared; but the revenge was doubtless sweet for all that. This was in February 1852; and it was only in the December of the previous year that Lord Palmerston was compelled to leave the Foreign Office by Lord John Russell.

The Russell Ministry had done little and initiated less. It had carried on Peel's system by throwing open the markets to foreign as well as colonial sugar, and by the repeal of the Navigation Laws enabled merchants to employ foreign ships and seamen in the conveyance of their goods. It had made a mild and ineffectual effort at a Reform Bill, and had feebly favoured attempts to admit Jews to Parliament. It sank from power with an unexpected collapse in which the nation felt small concern. Lord Palmerston did not come to power again at that moment. He might have gone in with Lord Derby if he had been so inclined. But Lord Derby, who, it may be said, had succeeded to that title on the death of his father in the preceding year, still talked of testing the policy of Free Trade at a general election, and of course Palmerston was not disposed to have anything to do with such a proposition. Lord Derby tried various combinations in vain, and at last had to experiment with a Cabinet of undiluted Protectionists. He had to take

office, not because he wanted it, or because anyone in particular wanted him; but simply and solely because there was no one else who could undertake the task. The Ministry which Lord Derby was able to form was not a strong one. Lord Palmerston described it as containing two men of mark, Derby and Disraeli, and a number of ciphers. It had not, except for these two, a single man of any political ability, and had hardly one of any political experience. It had an able lawyer for Lord Chancellor, Lord St. Leonards, but he was nothing of a politician. The rest of the members of the Government were respectable country gentlemen. The head of the Government was remarkable for his dashing blunders as a politician quite as much as for his dashing eloquence.

Concerning Mr. Disraeli himself it is not too much to say that many of his own party were rather more afraid of his genius than of the dulness of any of his colleagues. It is not a pleasant task in the best of circumstances to be at the head of a tolerated Ministry in the House of Commons: a Ministry which is in a minority, and only holds its place because there is no one ready to relieve it of the responsibility of office. Rarely indeed is the leadership of the House of Commons undertaken by anyone who has not previously held office; and Mr. Disraeli entered upon leadership and office at the same moment for the first time. He became Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House of Commons. Among the many gifts with which he was accredited by fame, not a single admirer had hitherto dreamed of including a capacity for the mastery of figures. In addition to all the ordinary difficulties of the Ministry of a minority there was, in this instance, the difficulty arising from the obscurity and inexperience of nearly all its members.

Facetious persons dubbed the new Administration the "Who? Who? Ministry." The explanation of this odd nickname was found in a story then in circulation about the Duke of Wellington. The Duke, it was said, was anxious to hear from Lord Derby at the earliest moment all about the composition of his Cabinet. He was overheard asking the new Prime Minister in the House of Lords the names of his intended colleagues. The Duke was rather deaf, and, like most deaf persons, spoke in very loud tones, and of course had to be answered in tones also rather elevated. That which was meant for a whispered conversation became audible to the whole House. As Lord Derby mentioned each name, the Duke asked in wonder and eagerness, "Who? Who?" After each new name came the same inquiry. The Duke of Wellington had clearly never heard of most of the new Ministers before. The story went about; and Lord Derby's Government was familiarly known as the "Who? Who? Ministry."

Lord Derby entered office with the avowed intention of testing the Protection question all over again. But he was no sooner in office than he found that the bare suggestion had immensely increased his difficulties. The Free Traders began to stand together again the moment Lord Derby gave his unlucky hint. Every week that passed over his head did something to show him the mistake he had made when he hampered himself with any such undertaking as the revival of the Protection question. Any chance the Government might otherwise have had of making effective head against their very trying difficulties was completely cut away from them. The Free Trade League was reorganised. A conference of Liberal members of the House of Commons was held at the residence of Lord John Russell in Chesham Place, at

which it was resolved to extract or extort from the Government a full avowal of their policy with regard to Protection and Free Trade. The feat would have been rather difficult of accomplishment, seeing that the Government had absolutely no policy to offer on the subject, and were only hoping to be able to consult the country as one might consult an oracle. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he made his financial statement, accepted the increased prosperity of the few years preceding with an unction which showed that he at least had no particular notion of attempting to reverse the policy which had so greatly contributed to its progress. Mr. Disraeli pleased the Peelites and the Liberals much more by his statement than he pleased his chief or many of his followers. His speech indeed was very skilful. People were glad that one who had proved himself so clever with many things should have shown himself equal to the uncongenial and unwonted task of dealing with dry facts and figures.

Mr. Disraeli merely proposed in his financial statement to leave things as he found them; to continue the income-tax for another year, as a provisional arrangement pending that complete re-examination of the financial affairs of the country to which he intimated that he found himself quite equal at the proper time. No one could suggest any better course; and the new Chancellor came off on the whole with flying colours. The Government on the whole did not do badly during this period of their probation. They introduced and carried a Militia Bill, for which they obtained the cordial support of Lord Palmerston; and they gave a Constitution to New Zealand; and then, in the beginning of July, the Parliament was prorogued and the dissolution took place. The elections were signalised by very serious riots in many parts

of the country. In Ireland particularly party passions ran high. The landlords and the police were on one side; the priests and the popular party on the other; and in several places there was some bloodshed. It was not in Ireland, however, a question about Free Trade or Protection. The question which agitated the Irish constituencies was that of Tenant Right in the first instance; and there was also much bitterness of feeling remaining from the discussions on the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill.

From the time of the elections nothing more was heard about Protection or about the possibility of getting a new trial for its principles. Mr. Disraeli not only threw Protection overboard, but boldly declared that no one could have supposed the Ministry had the slightest intention of proposing to bring back the laws that were repealed in 1846. In fact the time, he declared, had gone by when such exploded politics could even interest the people of this country. The elections did little or nothing for the Government. They gained a little, but they were still to be the Ministry of a minority; a Ministry on sufferance. It was plain to every one that their existence as a Ministry was only a question of days. Speculation was already busy as to their successors; and it was evident that a new Government could only be formed by some sort of coalition between the Whigs and the Peelites.

Among the noteworthy events of the general election was the return of Macaulay to the House of Commons. Edinburgh elected him in a manner particularly complimentary to him and honourable to herself. He had for some years been absent from Parliament. Differences had arisen between him and his constituents, and the result of it was that at the general election of 1847 Macaulay was left third on the poll at Edinburgh. He



felt this deeply. He might have easily found some other constituency; but his wounded pride hastened a resolution he had for some time been forming to retire to a life of private literary labour. He therefore remained out of Parliament. In 1852 the movement of Edinburgh towards him was entirely spontaneous. Edinburgh was anxious to atone for the error of which she had been guilty. Macaulay would go no further than to say that if Edinburgh spontaneously elected him, he should deem it a very high honour, but he would not do anything whatever to court favour. He did not want to be elected to Parliament, he said; he was very happy in his retirement. Edinburgh elected him on those terms. He was not long allowed by his health to serve her; but so long as he remained in the House of Commons it was as member for Edinburgh.

On September 14, 1852, the Duke of Wellington died. His end was singularly peaceful. He fell quietly asleep about a quarter-past three in the afternoon in Walmer Castle, and he did not wake any more. He was a very old man—in his eighty-fourth year—and his death had naturally been looked for as an event certain to come soon. Yet when it did come thus naturally and peacefully, it created a profound public emotion. No other man in our time ever held the position in England which the Duke of Wellington had occupied for more than a whole generation. The place he had won for himself was absolutely unique. His great deeds belonged to a past time. He was hardly anything of a statesman; he knew little and cared less about what may be called statecraft; and as an administrator he had made many mistakes. But the trust which the nation had in him as a counsellor was absolutely unlimited. It never entered into the mind of anyone to suppose that

the Duke of Wellington was actuated in any step he took, or advice he gave, by any feeling but a desire for the good of the State. His loyalty to the Sovereign had something antique and touching in it. There was a blending of personal affection with the devotion of a state servant which lent a certain romantic dignity to the demeanour and character of one who otherwise had but little of the poetical or the sentimental in his nature. In the business of politics he had but one prevailing anxiety, and that was that the Queen's Government should be satisfactorily carried on. He gave up again and again his own most cherished convictions, most ingrained prejudices, in order that he might not stand in the way of the Queen's Government and the proper carrying of it on. This simple fidelity, sometimes rather whimsically displayed, stood him often in stead of an exalted statesmanship, and enabled him to extricate the Government and the nation from difficulties in which a political insight far more keen than his might have failed to prove a guide.

It was for this simple and unswerving devotion to the national good that the people of England admired and revered him. He had not what would be called a loveable temperament, and yet the nation loved him. He was cold and brusque in manner, and seemed in general to have hardly a gleam of the emotional in him. This was not because he lacked affections. On the contrary, his affections and his friendships were warm and enduring; and even in public he had more than once given way to outbursts of emotion such as a stranger would never have expected from one of that cold and rigid demeanour. When Sir Robert Peel died, Wellington spoke of him in the House of Lords with the tears which he did not even try to control running down his cheeks.

But in his ordinary bearing there was little of the manner that makes a man a popular idol. He was not brilliant or dashing, or emotional or graceful. He was dry, cold, self-contained. Yet the people loved him and trusted in him; loved him perhaps especially because they so trusted in him. The nation was not ungrateful. It heaped honours on Wellington; it would have heaped more on him if it knew how. It gave him its almost unqualified admiration. On his death it tried to give him such a public funeral as hero never had.

The new Parliament was called together in November. It brought into public life in England a man who afterwards made some mark in our politics, and whose intellect and debating power seemed at one time to promise him a position inferior to that of hardly anyone in the House of Commons. This was Mr. Robert Lowe, who had returned from one of the Australian colonies to enter political life in his native country. Mr. Lowe was a scholar of a highly cultured order; and, despite some serious defects of delivery, he proved to be a debater of the very highest class, especially gifted with the weapons of sarcasm, scorn, and invective. He was a Liberal in the intellectual sense; he was opposed to all restraints on education and on the progress of a career; but he had a detestation for democratic doctrines which almost amounted to a mania. With the whole force of a temperament very favourable to intellectual scorn he despised alike the rural Tory and the town Radical. His opinions were generally rather negative than positive. He did not seem to have any very positive opinions of any kind where politics were concerned. He was governed by a detestation of abstractions and sentimentalities, and "views" of all sorts. If contempt for the intellectual weaknesses of an opposing party or doctrine

could have made a great politician, Mr. Lowe would have won that name. In politics, however, criticism is not enough. One must be able to originate, to mould the will of others, to compromise, to lead while seeming to follow, often to follow while seeming to lead. Of gifts like these Mr. Lowe had no share. He never became more than a great Parliamentary critic of the acrid and vitriolic style.

Almost immediately on the assembling of the new Parliament, Mr. Villiers brought forward a resolution not merely pledging the House of Commons to a Free Trade policy, but pouring out a sort of censure on all who had hitherto failed to recognise its worth. This step was thought necessary, and was indeed made necessary by the errors of which Lord Derby had been guilty, and the preposterous vapourings of some of his less responsible followers. If the resolution had been passed, the Government must have resigned. But Lord Palmerston devised an amendment which afforded them the means of a more or less honourable retreat. This resolution pledged the House to the "policy of unrestricted competition firmly maintained and prudently extended;" but recorded no panegyric of the legislation of 1846, and consequent condemnation of those who opposed that legislation. The amendment was accepted by all but the small band of irreconcilable Protectionists: 468 voted for it; only 53 against it; and the moan of Protection was made.

Still the Government existed only on sufferance. There was a general expectation that the moment Mr. Disraeli came to set out a genuine financial scheme the fate of the Administration would be decided. So the event proved. Mr. Disraeli made a financial statement which showed remarkable capacity for dealing with figures. The skill with which the Chancellor of the Exchequer explained

his measures and tossed his figures about convinced many even of his strongest opponents that he had the capacity to make a good budget if he only were allowed to do so by the conditions of his party's existence. But his Cabinet had come into office under special obligations to the country party and the farmers. They could not avoid making some experiment in the way of special legislation for the farmers. They had at the very least to put on an appearance of doing something for them. When Mr. Disraeli undertook to favour the country interest and the farmers, he must have known only too well that he was setting all the Free Traders and Peelites against him; and he knew at the same time that if he neglected the country party he was cutting the ground from beneath his feet. The principle of his budget was the reduction of the malt duties and the increase of the inhabited house duty. The reduction created a deficit, in order to supply which the inhabited house duty had to be doubled. The scheme was a complete failure. The farmers did not care much about the concession which had been made in their favour; those who would have had to pay for it in double taxation were bitterly indignant. The Whigs, the Free Traders, the Peelites, and such independent members or unattached members as Mr. Lowe and Mr. Bernal Osborne all fell on Mr. Disraeli. It became a combat *à outrance*. It well suited Mr. Disraeli's peculiar temperament. During the whole of his Parliamentary career he never fought so well as when he was free to indulge to the full the courage of despair.

The debate was one of the finest of its kind ever heard in Parliament during our time. The excitement on both sides was intense. The rivalry was hot and eager. Mr. Disraeli was animated by all the power of despera-

tion, and was evidently in a mood neither to give nor to take quarter. The House had hardly heard the concluding word of Disraeli's bitter and impassioned speech, when at two o'clock in the morning Mr. Gladstone leaped to his feet to answer him. Then began that long Parliamentary duel which only knew a truce when, at the close of the session of 1876, Mr. Disraeli crossed the threshold of the House of Commons for the last time, thenceforward to take his place among the peers as Lord Beaconsfield. The rivalry of this first heated and eventful night was a splendid display. Those who had thought it impossible that any impression could be made upon the House after the speech of Mr. Disraeli, had to acknowledge that a yet greater impression was produced by the unprepared reply of Mr. Gladstone. The House divided about four o'clock in the morning, and the Government were left in a minority of nineteen. That day the resignation of the Ministry was formally placed in the hands of the Queen. In a few days after, the Coalition Ministry was formed. Lord Aberdeen was Prime Minister; Lord John Russell took the Foreign Office; Lord Palmerston became Home Secretary; Mr. Gladstone was Chancellor of the Exchequer. The public were a good deal surprised that Lord Palmerston had taken such a place as that of Home Secretary. His name had been identified with the foreign policy of England, and it was not supposed that he felt the slightest interest in the ordinary business of the Home Department. But Palmerston would not consent to be Foreign Secretary on any terms but his own, and these terms were then out of the question.

The principal interest felt in the new Government was centred in the new Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Gladstone was still a young man in the Parlia-

mentary sense at least. He was but forty-three. His career had been in every way remarkable. He had entered public life at a very early age. He had been a distinguished debater in the House of Commons ever since he was one-and-twenty. Mr. Gladstone was born in Liverpool, and was the son of Sir John Gladstone, a Scotchman, who founded a great house in the seaport of the Mersey. He entered Parliament when very young as a *protégé* of the Newcastle family, and he soon faithfully attached himself to Sir Robert Peel. His knowledge of finance, his thorough appreciation of the various needs of a nation's commerce and business, his middle-class origin, all brought him into natural affinity with his great leader. He became a Free Trader with Peel. He was not in the House of Commons, oddly enough, during the session when the Free Trade battle was fought and won. As he had changed his opinions with his leader, he felt a reluctance to ask the support of the Newcastle family for the borough which he had previously represented by virtue of their influence. But except for that short interval his whole career may be pronounced one long Parliamentary success. He was from the very outset recognised as a brilliant debater, and as one who promised to be an orator; but the first really great speech made by Mr. Gladstone was the reply to Mr. Disraeli on the memorable December morning which we have just described. That speech put him in the very foremost rank of English orators. Then perhaps he first showed to the full the one great quality in which as a Parliamentary orator he has never had a rival in our time: the readiness which seems to require no preparation, but can marshal all its arguments as if by instinct at a given moment, and the fluency which can pour out the most eloquent language as freely as though it were but the breath of

the nostrils. When, shortly after the formation of the Coalition Ministry, Mr. Gladstone delivered his first budget, it was regarded as a positive curiosity of financial exposition. It was a performance that belonged to the department of the fine arts. The speech occupied several hours, and assuredly no listener wished it the shorter by a single sentence. Each time that he essayed the same task subsequently he accomplished just the same success. Mr. Gladstone's first oratorical qualification was his exquisite voice. Such a voice would make common-place seem interesting and lend something of fascination to dullness itself. It was singularly pure, clear, resonant, and sweet. The orator never seemed to use the slightest effort or strain in filling any hall and reaching the ear of the farthest among the audience. It was not a loud voice or of great volume; but strong, vibrating, and silvery. The words were always aided by energetic action and by the deep gleaming eyes of the orator. It is not to be denied that his wonderful gift of words sometimes led him astray. It was often such a fluency as that of a torrent on which the orator was carried away. Gladstone had to pay for his fluency by being too fluent. Sometimes he involved his sentence in parenthesis within parenthesis until the ordinary listener began to think extrication an impossibility; but the orator never failed to unravel all the entanglements and to bring the passage out to a clear and legitimate conclusion.

Often, however, this superb exuberant rush of words added indescribable strength to the eloquence of the speaker. In passages of indignant remonstrance or denunciation, when word followed word, and stroke came down upon stroke, with a wealth of resource that seemed inexhaustible, the very fluency and variety of the speaker overwhelmed his audience. Interruption only gave him



a new stimulus, and appeared to supply him with fresh resources of argument and illustration. His retorts leaped to his lips. Mr. Gladstone had not much humour of the playful kind, but he had a certain force of sarcastic and scornful rhetoric. He was always terribly in earnest. Whether the subject were great or small, he threw his whole soul into it. Once, in addressing a schoolboy gathering, he told his young listeners that if a boy ran he ought always to run as fast as he could; if he jumped, he ought always to jump as far as he could. He illustrated his maxim in his own career. He had no idea apparently of running or jumping in such measure as happened to please the fancy of the moment. He always exercised his splendid powers to the uttermost strain. Probably no one, past or present, had in combination so many gifts of voice, manner, fluency and argument, style, reason and passion, as Mr. Gladstone.

Mr. Gladstone grew slowly into Liberal convictions. At the time when he joined the Coalition Ministry he was still regarded as one who had scarcely left the camp of Toryism, and who had only joined that Ministry because it was a coalition. Years after he was applied to by the late Lord Derby to join a Ministry formed by him; and it was not supposed that there was anything unreasonable in the proposition. The first impulse towards Liberal principles was given to his mind probably by his change with his leader from Protection to Free Trade. When a man like Gladstone saw that his traditional principles and those of his party had broken down in any one direction it was but natural that he should begin to question their endurance in other directions. When Mr. Gladstone came to be convinced that there was no such law as the Protection principle at all; that it was a mere sham; that to believe in it was to be

guilty of an economic heresy—then it was impossible for him not to begin questioning the genuineness of the whole system of political thought of which it formed but a part. Perhaps, too, he was impelled towards Liberal principles at home by seeing what the effects of opposite doctrines had been abroad. He rendered memorable service to the Liberal cause of Europe by his eloquent protest against the brutal treatment of Baron Poerio and other Liberals of Naples who were imprisoned by the Neapolitan king—a protest which Garibaldi declared to have sounded the first trumpet-call of Italian liberty. In rendering service to Liberalism and to Europe he rendered service also to his own intelligence. He helped to set free his own spirit as well as the Neapolitan people. The common taunts addressed to public men who have changed their opinions were hardly ever applied to him. Even his enemies felt that the one idea always inspired him—a conscientious anxiety to do the right thing. The worst thing that was said of him was that he was too impulsive, and that his intelligence was too restless. He was an essayist, a critic, a Homeric scholar; a *dilettante* in art, music, and old china; he was a theological controversialist; he was a political economist, a financier, a practical administrator whose gift of mastering details has hardly ever been equalled; he was a statesman and an orator. No man could attempt so many things and not occasionally make himself the subject of a sneer. The intense gravity and earnestness of Gladstone's mind always, however, saved him from the special penalty of such versatility.

As yet, however, he is only the young statesman who was the other day the hope of the more solemn and solid Conservatives, and in whom they have not even yet entirely ceased to put some faith. The Coalition Ministry

was so formed that it was not supposed a man necessarily nailed his colours to any mast when he joined it. More than one of Gladstone's earliest friends and political associates had a part in it. The Ministry might undoubtedly be called an Administration of All the Talents. Except the late Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli, it included almost every man of real ability who belonged to either of the two great parties of the State. The Manchester School had, of course, no place there; but they were not likely just yet to be recognised as constituting one of the elements out of which even a Coalition Ministry might be composed.

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## CHAPTER XL

## THE CRIMEAN WAR.

FOR forty years England had been at peace. There had indeed been little wars here and there with some of her Asiatic and African neighbours, but from Waterloo downward England knew no real war. The new generation were growing up in a happy belief that wars were things of the past for us, like the wearing of armour. During all the convulsions of the Continent, England had remained undisturbed. A new school as well as a new generation had sprung up. This school, full of faith but full of practical shrewd logic as well, was teaching with great eloquence and effect that the practice of settling international controversy by the sword was costly, barbarous, and blundering as well as wicked. The practice of the duel in England had utterly gone out. Why then should it be unreasonable to believe that war among nations might soon become equally obsolete?

Such certainly was the faith of a great many intelligent persons at the time when the Coalition Ministry was formed. The majority tacitly acquiesced in the belief without thinking much about it. They had never in their time seen England engaged in European war; and it was natural to assume that what they had never seen they were never likely to see. Suddenly all this happy quiet faith was disturbed by the Eastern "question"—the question of what to do with the East of Europe. It was certain that things could not remain as they then were, and nothing else was certain. The Ottoman power

had been settled during many centuries in the South-east of Europe. The Turk had many of the strong qualities and even the virtues of a great warlike conqueror; but he had no capacity or care for the arts of peace. He never thought of assimilating himself to those whom he had conquered, or them to him. The Turks were not, as a rule, oppressive to the races that lived under them. They were not habitual persecutors of the faiths they deemed heretical. Every now and then, indeed, some sudden fierce outburst of fanatical cruelty towards some of the subject sects horrified Europe, and reminded her that the conqueror who had settled himself down in her south-eastern corner was still a barbarian who had no right or place in civilised life. But as a rule the Turk was disposed to look with disdainful composure on what he considered the religious follies of the heretical races who did not believe in the Prophet. They were objects of his scornful pity rather than of his anger.

At one time there is no doubt that all the powers of civilised Europe would gladly have seen the Turk driven out of our Continent. But the Turk was powerful for a long series of generations, and it seemed for a while rather a question whether he would not send the Europeans out of their own grounds. When he began to decay, and when his aggressive strength was practically all gone, it might have been thought that the Western Powers would then have managed somehow to get rid of him. But in the meantime the condition of Europe had greatly changed. No one not actually subject to the Turk was afraid of him any more; and other States had arisen strong for aggression. The uncertainties of these States as to the intentions of their neighbours and each other proved a better bulwark for the Turks than any warlike strength of their own could any longer have

furnished. The growth of the Russian empire was of itself enough to change the whole conditions of the problem.

Nothing in our times has been more remarkable than the sudden growth of Russia. A few generations ago Russia was literally an inland State. She was shut up in the heart of Eastern Europe as if in a prison. The genius, the craft and the audacity of Peter the Great first broke the narrow bounds set to the Russia of his day, and extended her frontier to the sea. He was followed after a reign or two by the greatest woman probably who ever sat on a throne, Elizabeth of England not even excepted. Catherine the Second so ably followed the example of Peter the Great, that she extended the Russian frontiers in directions which he had not had opportunity to stretch to. By the time her reign was done, Russia was one of the great powers of Europe, entitled to enter into negotiations on a footing of equality with the proudest States of the Continent. Unlike Turkey, Russia had always shown a yearning after the latest developments of science and of civilisation. A nation that tries to appear more civilised than it really is ends very often by becoming more civilised than its neighbours ever thought it likely to be.

The wars against Napoleon brought Russia into close alliance with England, Austria, Prussia, and other European States of old and advanced civilisation. She was recognised as a valuable friend and a most formidable enemy. Gradually it became evident that she could be aggressive as well as conservative. After a while it grew to be a fixed conviction in the mind of the Liberalism of Western Europe that Russia was the greatest obstacle then existing in civilisation to the spread of popular ideas. The Turk was comparatively harm-

less in that sense. He was well content now, so much had his ancient ambition shrunk and his ancient war spirit gone out, if his strong and restless neighbour would only let him alone. But he was brought at more than one point into especial collision with Russia. Many of the provinces he ruled over in European Turkey were of Sclavonian race, and of the religion of the Greek Church. They were thus affined by a double tie to the Russian people, and therefore the manner in which Turkey dealt with those provinces was a constant source of dispute between Russia and her. The Russians are a profoundly religious people. A Russian emperor could not be loved if he did not declare his undying resolve to be the protector of the Christian populations of Turkey. Much of this was probably sincere and single-minded on the part of the Russian people and most of the Russian politicians. But the other States of Europe began to suspect that mingled up with benign ideas of protecting the Christian populations of Turkey might be a desire to extend the frontier of Russia to the southward in a new direction. Europe had seen by what craft and what audacious enterprises Russia had managed to extend her empire to the sea in other quarters; it began to be commonly believed that her next object of ambition would be the possession of Constantinople and the Bosphorus. It was reported that a will of Peter the Great had left it as an injunction to his successors to turn all the efforts of their policy towards that object. The particular document which was believed to be a will of Peter the Great enjoined on all succeeding Russian sovereigns never to relax in the extension of their territory northward on the Baltic and southward on the Black Sea shores, and to encroach as far as possible in the direction of Constantinople and the Indies. It therefore seemed to be

the natural business of other European powers to see that the defects of the Ottoman Government, such as they were, should not be made an excuse for helping Russia to secure the objects of her special ambition. England of course, above all the rest, had an interest in watching over every movement that threatened in any way to interfere with the highway to India; still more her peaceful and secure possession of India itself. England, Russia and Turkey were alike in one respect: they were all Asiatic as well as European powers. But the days of Turkey's interfering with any great State were long over. On the contrary, there seemed something like a natural antagonism between England and Russia in the East. The Russians were extending their frontier towards that of our Indian empire. Our officers and diplomatic emissaries reported that they were continually confronted by the evidences of Russian intrigue in Central Asia. We have already seen how much influence the real or supposed intrigues of Russia had in directing our policy in Afghanistan. It was in great measure out of these alarms that there grew up among certain statesmen and classes in this country the conviction that the maintenance of the integrity of the Turkish empire was part of the national duty of England.

Sharply defined, the condition of things was this: Russia, by reason of her sympathy of religion or race with Turkey's Christian populations, was brought into chronic antagonism with Turkey; England, by reason of her Asiatic possessions, was kept in just the same state of antagonism to Russia. A crisis at last arose that threw England into direct hostility with Russia.

That crisis came about during the later years of the reign of the Emperor Nicholas. He saw its opening,



but not its close. Nicholas was a man of remarkable character. He had many of the ways of an Asiatic despot. He had a strong ambition, a fierce and fitful temper, a daring but sometimes too a vacillating will. He had many magnanimous and noble qualities, and moods of sweetness and gentleness. A certain excitability ran through the temperament of all his house, which, in some of its members, broke into actual madness. The Emperor at one time was very popular in England. He had visited the Queen, and he had impressed everyone by his noble presence, his lofty stature, his singular personal beauty, his blended dignity and familiarity of manner. He talked as if he had no higher ambition than to be in friendly alliance with England. When he wished to convey his impression of the highest degree of personal loyalty and honour, he always spoke of "the word of an English gentleman." There can, indeed, be little doubt that the Emperor was sincerely anxious to keep on terms of cordial friendship with England; and, what is more, had no idea until the very last that the way he was walking was one which England could not consent to tread. His brother and predecessor had been in close alliance with England; his own ideal hero was the Duke of Wellington; he had made up his mind that when the division of the spoils of Turkey came about, England and he could best consult for their own interests and the peace of the world by making the appropriation a matter of joint arrangement.

When he visited England in 1844, for the second time, Nicholas had several conversations with the Duke of Wellington and with Lord Aberdeen, then Foreign Secretary, about Turkey and her prospects, and what would be likely to happen in the case of her dissolution, which he believed to be imminent. When he returned

to Russia he had a memorandum drawn up by Count Nesselrode, his Chancellor, embodying the views which, according to Nicholas's impressions, were entertained alike by him and by the British statesmen with whom he had been conversing. The memorandum spoke of the imperative necessity of Turkey being made to keep her engagements and to treat her Christian subjects with toleration and mildness. On such conditions it was laid down that England and Russia must alike desire her preservation; but the document proceeded to say that nevertheless these States could not conceal from themselves the fact that the Ottoman empire contained within itself many elements of dissolution, and that unforeseen events might at any time hasten its fall. "In the uncertainty which hovers over the future a single fundamental idea seems to admit of a really practical application; that is, that the danger which may result from a catastrophe in Turkey will be much diminished if in the event of its occurring Russia and England have come to an understanding as to the course to be taken by them in common. That understanding will be the more beneficial inasmuch as it will have the full assent of Austria, between whom and Russia there already exists an entire accord." This document was sent to London and kept in the archives of the Foreign Office. The Emperor of Russia evidently believed that his views were shared by English statesmen. Therefore, it is to be regretted that the English statesmen should have listened to Nicholas without saying something very distinct to show that they were not admitting or accepting any combination of purpose; or that they should have received his memorandum without some clear disclaimer of their being in any way bound by its terms. We could scarcely have been too emphatic or too precise in con-

veying to the Emperor of Russia our determination to have nothing to do with any such conspiracy.

Time went on, and the Emperor thought he saw an occasion for still more clearly explaining his plans and for reviving the supposed understanding with England. Lord Aberdeen came into office as Prime Minister of this country; Lord Aberdeen, who was Foreign Secretary when Nicholas was in England in 1844. In January 1853, the Emperor had several conversations with our minister, Sir G. Hamilton Seymour, about the future of Turkey and the arrangements it might be necessary for England and Russia to make regarding it. The conversations were renewed again and again afterwards. They all tended towards the one purpose. The Emperor urged that England and Russia ought to make arrangements beforehand as to the inheritance of the Ottoman in Europe—before what he regarded as the approaching and inevitable day when the “sick man”—so the Emperor called Turkey—must come to die. If only England and Russia could arrive at an understanding on the subject, he declared that it was a matter of indifference to him what other powers might think or say. He spoke of the several millions of Christians in Turkey whose rights he was called upon to watch over, and he remarked—the remark is of significance—that the right of watching over them was secured to him by treaty. The Emperor was evidently under the impression that the interests of England and of Russia were united in this proposed transaction. He had no idea of anything but the most perfect frankness so far as we were concerned. But the English Government never, after the disclosures of Sir Hamilton Seymour, put any faith in Nicholas. They regarded him as nothing better than a plotter. The English Minister and the English Government could

only answer the Emperor's overtures by saying that they did not think it quite usual to enter into arrangements for the spoliation of a friendly power, and that England had no desire to succeed to any of the possessions of Turkey.

The conversations with Sir Hamilton Seymour formed but an episode in the history of the events that were then going on. There had long been going on a dispute about the Holy Places in Palestine. The claims of the Greek Church and those of the Latin Church were in antagonism there. The Emperor of Russia was the protector of the Greek Church; the Kings of France had long had the Latin Church under their protection. The Holy Places to which the Latins raised a claim were the great Church in Bethlehem; the Sanctuary of the Nativity; the tomb of the Virgin; the Stone of Anointing; the Seven Arches of the Virgin in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. In the reign of Francis the First of France, a treaty was made with the Sultan by which France was acknowledged the protector of the Holy Places in Palestine, and of the monks of the Latin Church who took on themselves the care of the sacred monuments and memorials. But the Greek Church afterwards obtained firmans from the Sultan; and the Greeks claimed on the strength of these concessions that they had as good a right as the Latins to take care of the Holy Places. Disputes were always arising, and of course these were aggravated by the fact that France was supposed to be concerned in the protection of one set of disputants and Russia in that of another. The claims at length came to be identified with the States which respectively protected them. An advantage of the smallest kind gained by the Latins was viewed as an insult to Russia; a concession to the Greeks was a snub to France.

It was France which first stirred the controversy in the time just before the Crimean War. The French ambassador, M. de Lavalette, is said to have threatened that a French fleet should appear off Jaffa, and even hinted at a French occupation of Jerusalem, "when," as he significantly put it, "we should have all the sanctuaries." The cause of all this energy is not far to seek. The Prince President had only just succeeded in procuring himself to be installed as Emperor; and he was very anxious to distract the attention of Frenchmen from domestic politics to some showy and startling policy abroad. This controversy between the Church of the East and the Church of the West tempted him into activity as one that seemed likely to give him an opportunity of displaying the power of France and of the new system without any very great danger or responsibility.

The key of the whole controversy out of which the Eastern war arose, and out of which indeed all subsequent complications in the East came as well, was said to be found in a clause of the Treaty of Kutchuk-Kainardji. The Treaty of Kutchuk-Kainardji was made on July 10, 1774, between the Ottoman Porte and Catherine II. of Russia after a war in which the arms of the great Empress had been completely victorious. The seventh clause declared that the Sublime Porte promised "to protect constantly the Christian religion and its churches; and also to allow the minister of the Imperial Court of Russia to make on all occasions representations as well in favour of the new church in Constantinople, of which mention will be made in the fourteenth article, as in favour of those who officiate therein, promising to take such representations into due consideration as being made by a confidential functionary of a neighbouring and sin-

cerely friendly power." Not much possibility of misunderstanding about these words, one might feel inclined to say. We turn then to the fourteenth article alluded to, in order to discover if in its wording lies the perplexity of meaning which led to such momentous and calamitous results. We find that by this article it is simply permitted to the Court of Russia to build a public church of the Greek rite in the Galata quarter of Constantinople, in addition to the chapel built in the house of the minister; and it is declared that the new church "shall be always under the protection of the ministers of the (Russian) empire, and shielded from all obstruction and all damage." Here, then, we seem to have two clauses of the simplest meaning and by no means of first-class importance. The latter clause allows Russia to build a new church in Constantinople; the former allows the Russian minister to make representations to the Porte on behalf of the church and of those who officiate in it. What difference of opinion, it may be asked, could possibly arise? The difference was this: Russia claimed a right of protectorate over all the Christians of the Greek Church in Turkey as the consequence of the seventh clause of the treaty. She insisted that when Turkey gave her a right to interfere on behalf of the worshippers in one particular church, the same right extended so far as to cover all the worshippers of the same denomination in every part of the Ottoman dominions. The great object of Russia throughout all the negotiations that preceded the Crimean War was to obtain from the Porte an admission of the existence of such a protectorate. Such an acknowledgment would, in fact, have made the Emperor of Russia the patron and all but the ruler of by far the larger proportion of the populations of European Turkey. The Sultan would no longer have been master in his own

dominions. The Greek Christians would naturally have regarded the Russian Emperor's right of intervention on their behalf as constituting a protectorate far more powerful than the nominal rule of the Sultan. They would have known that the ultimate decision of any dispute in which they were concerned rested with the Emperor, and not with the Sultan; and they would soon have come to look upon the Emperor, and not the Sultan, as their actual sovereign.

Now it does not seem likely on the face of things that any ruler of a state would have consented to hand over to a more powerful foreign monarch such a right over the great majority of his subjects. Still, if Turkey, driven to her last defences, had no alternative but to make such a concession, the Emperors of Russia could not be blamed for insisting that it should be carried out. The terms of the article in the treaty itself certainly do not seem to admit of such a construction. Whenever we find Russia putting a claim into plain words, we find England, through her ministers, refusing to give it their acknowledgment. Diplomacy, therefore, was powerless to do good during all the protracted negotiations that set in, before the Crimean War, for the plain reason that the only object of the Emperor of Russia in entering upon negotiation at all was one which the other European powers regarded as absolutely inadmissible.

The dispute about the Holy Places was easily settled. The Porte cared very little about the matter, and was willing enough to come to any fair terms by which the whole controversy could be got rid of. But the demands of Russia went on just as before. Prince Mentschikoff, a fierce, rough man, unable or unwilling to control his temper, was sent with demands to Constantinople. Mentschikoff brought his proposals with him cut and dry

in the form of a convention which he called upon Turkey to accept without more ado. Turkey refused, and Prince Mentschikoff withdrew in real or affected rage, and presently the Emperor Nicholas sent two divisions of his army across the Pruth to take possession of the Danubian principalities.

Diplomacy, however, did not give in even then. A note was concocted at Vienna which Russia at once offered to accept. The four great Powers who were carrying on the business of mediation were at first quite charmed with the note, with the readiness of Russia to accept it, and with themselves; and but for the interposition of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, our ambassador at Constantinople, who showed great acuteness and force of character through all these negotiations, it seems highly probable that it would have been agreed to by all the parties concerned. Lord Stratford, however, saw plainly that the note was a virtual concession to Russia of all that she specially desired to have, and all that Europe was unwilling to concede to her. It contained, for instance, words which declared that the Government of his Majesty the Sultan would remain "faithful to the letter and the spirit of the stipulations of the Treaties of Kainardji and of Adrianople, relative to the protection of the Christian religion." These words, in a note drawn up for the purpose of satisfying the Emperor of Russia, could not but be understood as recognising the interpretation of the Treaty of Kainardji on which Russia had always insisted. The Russian Government refused to accept any modifications.

From that time all hopes of peace were over. Our troops were moving towards Malta; the streets of London, of Liverpool, of Southampton, and other towns, were ringing with the cheers of enthusiastic crowds gathered



together to watch the marching of troops destined for the East. Turkey had actually declared war against Russia. We had known so little of war for nearly forty years, that added to all the other emotions which the coming of battle must bring was the mere feeling of curiosity as to the sensation produced by a state of war. It was an abstraction to the living generation—a thing to read of and discuss and make poetry and romance out of; but they could not yet realise what itself was like.

Meantime where was Lord Palmerston? He of all men, one would think, must have been pleased with the turn things were taking. He was really very busy all this time in his new duties. Lord Palmerston was a remarkably efficient and successful Home Secretary. His unceasing activity loved to show itself in whatever department he might be called upon to occupy. He brought to the somewhat prosaic duties of his new office all the energy which he had formerly shown in managing revolutions and dictating to foreign courts. The ticket-of-leave system dates from the time of his administration. The measure to abate the smoke nuisance, by compelling factories under penalties to consume their own smoke, is also the offspring of Palmerston's activity in the Home Office. The Factory Acts were extended by him. He went energetically to work in the shutting up of graveyards in the metropolis. He was acquiring a new and a somewhat odd reputation in his way of answering deputations and letters. Lord Palmerston was always civil and cordial; he was full of a peculiar kind of fresh common sense, and always ready to apply it to any subject whatever. He could at any time say some racy thing which set the public wondering and laughing. He had not a poetic or philosophic mind. In clearing his intelligence from all that he would have called prejudice or

superstition, he had cleared out also much of the deeper sympathetic faculty which enables one man to understand the feelings and get at the springs of conduct in the breasts of other men. No one can doubt that his jaunty way of treating grave and disputed subjects offended many pure and simple minds. Yet it was a mistake to suppose that mere levity dictated his way of dealing with the prejudices of others. He had often given the question his deepest attention, and come to a conclusion with as much thought as his temperament would have allowed to any subject. The difference between him and graver men was that when he had come to a conclusion seriously, he loved to express his views humorously. But there can be no doubt that Palmerston often made enemies by his seeming levity when another man could easily have made friends by saying just the same thing in grave words. The majority of the House of Commons liked him because he amused them and made them laugh; and they thought no more of the matter.

But the war is now fairly launched; and Palmerston is to all appearance what would be vulgarly called "out of the swim." Every eye was turned to him. One day it was given out that Palmerston had actually resigned. It was at once asserted that his resignation was caused by difference of opinion between him and his colleagues on the Eastern policy of the Government. But on the other hand it was as stoutly affirmed that the difference of opinion had only to do with the new Reform Bill which Lord John Russell was preparing to introduce. Few people in England who cared anything about the whole question believed that at such a time Lord Palmerston would have gone out of office because he did not quite like the details of a Reform Bill, or that the Cabinet would have obstinately clung to such a scheme

just then in spite of his opposition. When Lord Palmerston resumed his place in the Ministry, the public at large felt certain that the war spirit was now at last to have its way, and that the dallyings of the peace-lovers were over. Nor was England long left to guess at the reason why Lord Palmerston had so suddenly resigned his office, and so suddenly returned to it. A great disaster had fallen upon Turkey. Her fleet had been destroyed by the Russians at Sinope, a considerable seaport town and naval station belonging to Turkey on the southern shore of the Black Sea, on November 30, 1853. The attack was not treacherous, but openly made; not sudden, but clearly announced by previous acts. Russia and Turkey were not only formally but actually at war. The Turks were the first to begin the actual military operations. But at the time, when the true state of affairs was little known in England, the account of the "massacre of Sinope" was received as if it had been the tale of some unparalleled act of treachery and savagery; and the eagerness of the country for war against Russia became inflamed to actual passion.

It was at that moment that Palmerston resigned his office. The Cabinet were still not prepared to go as far as he would have gone. Lord Palmerston, supported by the urgent pressure of the Emperor of the French, succeeded, however, in at last overcoming their determination; and Lord Palmerston resumed his place, master of the situation. France and England told Russia that they were resolved to prevent any repetition of the Sinope affair; that their squadrons would enter the Black Sea with orders to request, and if necessary to constrain, every Russian ship met in the Euxine to return to Sebastopol; and to repel by force any act of aggression afterwards attempted against the Ottoman territory or

flag. This was, in fact, war. When the resolution of the Western Cabinets was communicated to the Emperor of Russia he withdrew his representatives from London and Paris. On February 21, 1854, the diplomatic relations between Russia and the two allied powers were brought to a stop. Six weeks before this the English and French fleets had entered the Black Sea. A few days after a crowd assembled in front of the Royal Exchange to watch the performance of a ceremonial that had been little known to the living generation. The Sergeant-at-Arms, accompanied by some of the officials of the City, read from the steps of the Royal Exchange her Majesty's declaration of war against Russia.

The principal reason for the separation of the two Western Powers of Europe from the other great States was found in the condition of Prussia. The Prussian sovereign was related to the Emperor of Russia, and his kingdom was almost overshadowed by Russian influence. Prussia had come to occupy a lower position in Europe than she had ever before held during her existence as a kingdom. The King of Prussia was a highly-cultured, amiable, literary man. He loved letters and art in a sort of *dilettante* way; he had good impulses and a weak nature; he was a dreamer; a sort of philosopher *manqué*. He was unable to make up his mind to any momentous decision until the time for rendering it effective had gone by. A man naturally truthful, he was often led by very weakness into acts that seemed irreconcilable with his previous promises and engagements. He could say witty and sarcastic things, and when political affairs went wrong with him, he could console himself with one or two sharp sayings only heard of by those immediately around him; and then the world might go its way for him. He went so far with the allies as to lead them for

a while to believe that he was going all the way; but at the last moment he broke off, declared that the interests of Prussia did not require or allow him to engage in a war, and left France and England to walk their own road. Austria could not venture upon such a war without the co-operation of Prussia. Austria and Prussia made an arrangement between themselves for mutual defence in case the progress of the war should directly imperil the interests of either; and England and France undertook in alliance the task of chastising the presumption and restraining the ambitious designs of Russia. It must be remembered that the controversy between Russia and the West really involved several distinct questions, in some of which Prussia had absolutely no direct interest and Austria very little. Foremost among these was the question of the Straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus.

Russia and Turkey between them surrounded the whole of the Black Sea with their territory. The only outlet of Russia on the southern side is the Black Sea. The Black Sea is, save for one little outlet at its southwestern extremity, a huge land-locked lake. That little outlet is the narrow channel called the Bosphorus. The Bosphorus is some seventeen miles in length, and in some places it is hardly more than half a mile in breadth. But it is very deep all through, so that ships of war can float close up to its very shores on either side. It passes between the city of Constantinople and its Asiatic suburb of Scutari, and then opens into the little Sea of Marmora. Out of the Sea of Marmora the way westward is through the channel of the Dardanelles, which forms the passage into the Archipelago, and thence into the Mediterranean. The channel of the Dardanelles is, like the Bosphorus, narrow and very deep, but it pursues its course for some

forty miles. Anyone who holds a map in his hand will see at once how Turkey and Russia alike are affected by the existence of the Straits on either extremity of the Sea of Marmora. Close up these Straits against vessels of war, and the capital of the Sultan is absolutely unsailable from the sea. Close them, on the other hand, and the Russian fleet in the Black Sea is absolutely cut off from the Mediterranean and the Western world. But then it has to be remembered that the same act of closing would secure the Russian ports and shores on the Black Sea from the approach of any of the great navies of the West. The Dardanelles and the Bosphorus being alike such narrow channels, and being edged alike by Turkish territory, were not regarded as high seas. The Sultans always claimed the right to exclude foreign ships of war from both the Straits. The closing of the Straits had been the subject of a perfect succession of treaties.

As matters stood then, the Sultan was not only permitted but was bound to close the Straits in times of peace, and no navy might enter them without his consent even in times of war. By this treaty the Black Sea fleet of Russia became literally a Black Sea fleet, wholly cut off from the Mediterranean and Western Europe. Naturally Russia chafed at this; but at the same time she was not willing to see the restriction withdrawn in favour of an arrangement that would leave the Straits, and consequently the Black Sea, open to the navies of France and England. Therefore it was natural that the ambition of Russia should tend towards the ultimate possession of Constantinople and the Straits for herself; but as this was an ambition the fulfilment of which seemed far off and beset with vast dangers, her object, meanwhile, was to gain as much influence and ascendancy as possible over the Ottoman Government; to make

it practically her vassal, and in any case to prevent any other great Power from obtaining the influence and ascendancy which she coveted for herself. Now the tendency of this ambition and of all the intermediate claims and disputes with regard to the opening or closing of the Straits was of importance to Europe generally as a part of Russian aggrandisement; but of the great Powers they concerned England most; France as a Mediterranean and a naval power; Austria only in a third and remoter degree; and Prussia at the time of King Frederick William least of all.

To the great majority of the English people this war was popular, partly because of the natural and inevitable reaction against the doctrines of peace and mere trading prosperity, partly too because of its novelty. The doctrines of the Peace Society had never taken any hold of this country at all. Its votaries were in any case not many at the time when the Crimean War broke out. They had very little influence on the course of national policy. They were assailed with a flippant and a somewhat ignoble ridicule. The worst reproach that could be given to men like Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright was to accuse them of being members of the Peace Society. It does not appear that either man was a member of the actual organisation. Mr. Bright's religious creed made him necessarily a votary of peace; Mr. Cobden had attended meetings called with the futile purpose of establishing peace among nations by the operation of good feeling and of common sense.

In the Cabinet itself there were men who disliked the idea of a war quite as much as they did. Lord Aberdeen detested war, and thought it so absurd a way of settling national disputes, that almost until the first cannon-shot had been fired he could not bring himself

to believe in the possibility of the intelligent English people being drawn into it. Mr. Gladstone had a conscientious and a sensitive objection to war in general as a brutal and an unchristian occupation, although his feelings would not have carried him so far away as to prevent his recognition of the fact that war might often be a just, a necessary, and a glorious undertaking on the part of a civilized nation. The difficulties of the hour were considerably enhanced by the differences of opinion that prevailed in the Cabinet.

There were other differences there as well as those that belonged to the mere abstract question of the glory or the guilt of war. It soon became clear that two parties of the Cabinet looked on the war and its objects with different eyes and interests. On one side there were Lord Aberdeen and Mr. Gladstone, who were concerned far more for the welfare of Turkey's Christian subjects than for the stability of Turkey or the humiliation of Russia. On the other side was Lord Palmerston, gay, resolute, clear as to his own purpose, convinced to the heart's core of everything which just then it was for the advantage of his cause to believe. The brave Turk had to be supported; the wicked Russian had to be put down. It was impossible to doubt on which side were to be found the materials for the successful conduct of enterprise which was now so popular with the country. The most conscientious men might differ about the prudence or the moral propriety of the war; but to those who once accepted its necessity and wished our side to win, there could be no possible doubt, even for members of the Peace Society, as to the importance of having Lord Palmerston either at the head of affairs or in charge of the war itself. The moment the war actually broke out it became evident to everyone that Palmer-



ston's interval of comparative inaction and obscurity was well-nigh over.

England then and France entered the war as allies. Lord Raglan, formerly Lord Fitzroy Somerset, an old pupil of the Great Duke in the Peninsular War, and who had lost his right arm serving under Wellington at Waterloo, was appointed to command the English forces. Marshal St. Arnaud, a bold, brilliant soldier of fortune, was entrusted by the Emperor of the French with the leadership of the soldiers of France. The allied forces went out to the East and assembled at Varna, on the Black Sea shore, from which they were to make their descent on the Crimea. The invasion of the Crimea, however, was not welcomed by the English or the French commander. It was undertaken by Lord Raglan out of deference to the recommendations of the Government; and by Marshal St. Arnaud out of deference to the Emperor of the French. The allied forces were therefore conveyed to the south-western shore of the Crimea, and effected a landing in Kalamita Bay, a short distance north of the point at which the river Alma runs into the sea. Sebastopol itself lies about thirty miles to the south; and then more southward still, divided by the bulk of a jutting promontory from Sebastopol, is the harbour of Balaklava. The disembarkation began on the morning of September 14, 1854, and was effected without any opposition from the Russians. On September 19 the allies marched out of their encampments and reached the Alma about noon on September 20. They found that they had to cross the river in the face of the Russian batteries armed with heavy guns on the highest points of the hills or bluffs, of scattered artillery, and of dense masses of infantry which covered the hills. The Russians were under the command of Prince Mentschi-

koff. The soldiers of the Czar fought stoutly and stubbornly as they have always done; but they could not stand up against the blended vehemence and obstinacy of the English and French. The river was crossed, the opposite heights were mounted, Prince Mentschikoff's great redoubt was carried, the Russians were driven from the field, the allies occupied their ground; the victory was to the Western Powers. The first field was fought, and we had won.

The Russians ought to have been pursued. But there was no pursuit. Lord Raglan was eager to follow up the victory; but the French had as yet hardly any cavalry, and Marshal St. Arnaud would not agree to any further enterprise that day. Lord Raglan believed that he ought not to persist; and nothing was done. Except for the bravery of those who fought, the battle was not much to boast of. But it was the first great battle which for nearly forty years our soldiers had fought with a civilised enemy. The military authorities and the country were well disposed to make the most of it. The gallant medley on the banks of the Alma and the fruitless interval of inaction that followed it were told of as if men were speaking of some battle of the gods. Very soon, however, a different note came to be sounded. The campaign had been opened under conditions differing from those of most campaigns that went before it. Science had added many new discoveries to the art of war. Literature had added one remarkable contribution of her own to the conditions amid which campaigns were to be carried on. She had added the "special correspondent." The war correspondent now scrawls his despatches as he sits in his saddle under the fire of the enemy; he scrawls them with a pencil, noting and describing each incident of the fight, so far as he can see

it, as coolly as if he were describing a review of volunteers in Hyde Park; and he contrives to send off his narrative by telegraph before the victor in the fight has begun to pursue, or has settled down to hold the ground he won; and the war correspondent's story is expected to be as brilliant and picturesque in style as it ought to be exact and faithful in its statements. In the days of the Crimea things had not advanced quite so far as that; the war was well on before the submarine telegraph between Varna and the Crimea allowed of daily reports; but the feats of the war correspondent then filled men's minds with wonder. When the expedition was leaving England it was accompanied by a special correspondent from each of the great daily papers of London. The *Times* sent out a representative whose name almost immediately became celebrated—Mr. William Howard Russell, the first of war correspondents in that day as Mr. Archibald Forbes of the *Daily News* was at a later period. Mr. Russell rendered some service to the English army and to his country, however, which no brilliancy of literary style would alone have enabled him to do. It was to his great credit as a man of judgment and observation that, being a civilian who had never before seen one puff of war-smoke, he was able to distinguish between the confusion inseparable from all actual levying of war and the confusion that comes of distinctly bad administration. Mr. Russell soon saw that there was confusion; and he had the soundness of judgment to know that the confusion was that of a breaking-down system. Therefore, while the fervour of delight in the courage and success of our army was still fresh in the minds of the public at home, while every music-hall was ringing with the cheap rewards of valour in the shape of popular glorifications

of our commanders and our soldiers, the readers of the *Times* began to learn that things were faring badly indeed with the conquering army of the Alma. The ranks were thinned by the ravages of cholera. The hospitals were in a wretchedly disorganised condition. Stores of medicines and strengthening food were decaying in places where no one wanted them or could well get at them, while men were dying in hundreds among our tents in the Crimea for lack of them. The system of clothing, of transport, of feeding, of nursing—everything had broken down. The special correspondent of the *Times* and other correspondents continued to din these things into the ears of the public at home. Exultation began to give way to a feeling of dismay. The patriotic anger against the Russians was changed for a mood of deep indignation against our own authorities and our own war administration. It soon became apparent to everyone that the whole campaign had been planned on the assumption of our military authorities here at home—we do not speak of the commanders in the field—that Sebastopol was to fall like another Jericho, at the sound of the war-trumpets' blast.

Our commanders in the field were, on the contrary, rather disposed to overrate than to underrate the strength of the Russians. It is very likely that if a sudden dash had been made at Sebastopol by land and sea, it might have been taken almost at the very opening of the war. But the delay gave the Russians full warning; and they did not neglect it. On the third day after the battle of the Alma the Russians sank seven vessels of their Black Sea fleet at the entrance of the harbour of Sebastopol, and the entrance of the harbour was barred as by sunken rocks against any approach of an enemy's ship. There was an end to every dream of a sudden capture

of Sebastopol. The allied armies moved again from their positions on the Alma to Balaklava, which lies south of the city, on the other side of a promontory, and which has a port that might enable them to secure a constant means of communication between the armies and the fleets. Sebastopol was but a few miles off, and preparations were at once made for an attack on it by land and sea. On October 17 the attack began. It was practically a failure. The fleet could not get near enough to the sea-forts of Sebastopol to make their broadsides of any real effect, because of the shallow water and the sunken ships; and although the attack from the land was vigorous and was fiercely kept up, yet it could not carry its object.

The Russians attacked the allies fiercely on October 25, in the hope of obtaining possession of Balaklava. The attempt was bold and brilliant; but it was splendidly repulsed. Never did a day of battle do more credit to English courage, or less perhaps to English generalship. The cavalry particularly distinguished themselves. It was in great measure on our side a cavalry action. It will be memorable in all English history as the battle in which occurred the famous charge of the Light Brigade. Owing to some fatal misconception of the meaning of an order from the Commander-in-Chief, the Light Brigade, 607 men in all, charged what has been rightly described as "the Russian army in position." Of the 607 men 198 came back. Long, painful, and hopeless were the disputes about this fatal order. The controversy can never be wholly settled. The officer who bore the order was one of the first who fell in the outset. All Europe, all the world, rang with wonder and admiration of the futile and splendid charge. The Poet Laureate sang of it in spirited verses.

Perhaps its best épitaph was contained in the celebrated comment ascribed to the French General Bosquet, and which has since become proverbial, and been quoted until men are well-nigh tired of it—"It was magnificent, but it was not war."

Next day, the enemy made another vigorous attack on a much larger scale, moving out of Sebastopol itself, and were again repulsed. On November 5 the Russians made another grand attack on the allies, chiefly on the British, and were once more splendidly repulsed. The plateau of Inkerman was the principal scene of the struggle. It was occupied by the Guards and a few British regiments, on whom General Bosquet with his French was able to come to their assistance, the task of resisting a Russian army. This was the severest and the fiercest engagement of the campaign. Inkerman was described at the time as the soldiers' battle. Strategy, it was said everywhere, there was none. The attack was made under cover of a dark and drizzling mist. The battle was fought for a while almost absolutely in the dark. There was hardly any attempt to direct the allies by any principles of scientific warfare. The soldiers fought stubbornly a series of hand-to-hand fights, and we are entitled to say that the better men won in the end.

Meanwhile what were people saying in England? They were indignantly declaring that the whole campaign was a muddle. The temper of a people thus stimulated and thus disappointed is almost always indiscriminating and unreasonable in its censure. The first idea is to find a victim. The victim on whom the anger of a large portion of the public turned in this instance was the Prince Consort. The most absurd ideas, the most cruel and baseless calumnies, were in circulation about him.

He was accused of having out of some inscrutable motive made use of all his secret influence to prevent the success of the campaign. He was charged with being in a conspiracy with Prussia, with Russia, with no one knew exactly whom, to weaken the strength of England, and secure a triumph for her enemies. Stories were actually told at one time of his having been arrested for high treason. The charges which sprang of this heated and unjust temper on the part of the public did not indeed long prevail against the Prince Consort. When once the subject came to be taken up in Parliament it was shown almost in a moment that there was not the slightest ground or excuse for any of the absurd surmises and cruel suspicions which had been creating so much agitation. The agitation collapsed in a moment. But while it lasted it was both vehement and intense, and gave much pain to the Prince, and far more pain still to the Queen his wife.

The winter was gloomy at home as well as abroad. The news constantly arriving from the Crimea told only of devastation caused by foes far more formidable than the Russians—sickness, bad weather, bad management. The Black Sea was swept and scourged by terrible storms. The destruction of transport-ships laden with winter stores for our men was of incalculable injury to the army. Clothing, blanketing, provisions, hospital necessities of all kinds, were destroyed in vast quantities. The loss of life among the crews of the vessels was immense. A storm was nearly as disastrous in this way as a battle. On shore the sufferings of the army were unspeakable. The tents were torn from their pegs and blown away. The officers and men were exposed to the bitter cold and the fierce stormy blasts. Our soldiers had for the most part little experience or even idea of such cold as

they had to encounter this gloomy winter. The intensity of the cold was so great that no one might dare to touch any metal substance in the open air with his bare hand under the penalty of leaving the skin behind him. The hospitals for the sick and wounded at Scutari were in a wretchedly disorganised condition. They were for the most part in an absolutely chaotic condition as regards arrangement and supply. In some instances medical stores were left to decay at Varna, or were found lying useless in the holds of vessels in Balaklava bay, which were needed for the wounded at Scutari. The medical officers were able and zealous men; the stores were provided and paid for so far as our Government was concerned; but the stores were not brought to the medical men. These had their hands all but idle, their eyes and souls tortured by the sight of sufferings which they were unable to relieve for want of the commonest appliances of the hospital. The most extraordinary instances of blunder and confusion were constantly coming to light. Great consignments of boots arrived, and were found to be all for the left foot. Mules for the conveyance of stores were contracted for and delivered, but delivered so that they came into the hands of the Russians and not of us. Shameful frauds were perpetrated in the instance of some of the contracts for preserved meat. The evils of the hospital disorganisation were happily made a means of bringing about a new system of attending to the sick and wounded in war which has already created something like a revolution in the manner of treating the victims of battle. Mr. Sidney Herbert, horrified at the way in which things were managed in Scutari and the Crimea, applied to a distinguished woman who had long taken a deep interest in hospital reform to superintend personally the nursing of the soldiers. Miss Florence



Nightingale was the daughter of a wealthy English country gentleman. She had chosen not to pass her life in fashionable or æsthetic inactivity; and had from a very early period turned her attention to sanitary questions. She had studied nursing as a science and a system; had made herself acquainted with the working of various continental institutions; and about the time when the war broke out she was actually engaged in reorganising the Sick Governesses' Institution in Harley Street, London. To her Mr. Sidney Herbert turned. He offered her, if she would accept the task he proposed, plenary authority over all the nurses, and an unlimited power of drawing on the Government for whatever she might think necessary to the success of her undertaking. Miss Nightingale accepted the task, and went out to Scutari accompanied by some women of rank like her own, and a trained staff of nurses. They speedily reduced chaos into order; and from the time of their landing in Scutari there was at least one department of the business of war which was never again a subject of complaint. The spirit of the chivalric days had been restored under better auspices for its abiding influence. Sidney Herbert, in his letter to Miss Nightingale, has said that her example, if she accepted the task he proposed, would "multiply the good to all time." These words proved to have no exaggeration in them. We have never seen a war since in which women of education and of genuine devotion have not given themselves up to the task of caring for the wounded. The Geneva Convention and the bearing of the Red Cross are among the results of Florence Nightingale's work in the Crimea.

But the siege of Sebastopol was meanwhile dragging heavily along; and sometimes it was not quite certain which ought to be called the besieged, the Russians in

the city or the allies encamped in sight of it. During some months the armies did little or nothing. The commissariat system and the land transport system had broken down. The armies were miserably weakened by sickness. Cholera was ever and anon raging anew among our men. Horses and mules were dying of cold and starvation. The roads were only deep irregular ruts filled with mud; the camp was a marsh; the tents stood often in pools of water; the men had sometimes no beds but straw dripping with wet; and hardly any bed coverings. Our unfortunate Turkish allies were in a far more wretched plight than even we ourselves. The authorities who ought to have looked after them were impervious to the criticisms of special correspondents and unassailable by Parliamentary votes of censure. A condemnation of the latter kind was hanging over our Government. Parliament was called together before Christmas; and after the Christmas recess Mr. Roebuck gave notice that he would move for a select committee to inquire into the condition of the army before Sebastopol, and into the conduct of those departments of the Government whose duty it had been to minister to the wants of the army. Lord John Russell did not believe for himself that the motion could be conscientiously resisted; but as it necessarily involved a censure upon some of his colleagues, he did not think he ought to remain longer in the Ministry, and he therefore resigned his office. The sudden resignation of the leader of the House of Commons was a death-blow to any plans of resistance by which the Government might otherwise have thought of encountering Mr. Roebuck's motion. Mr. Roebuck's motion came on, and was resisted with vigour by Lord Palmerston and Mr. Gladstone. The House of Commons was not to be moved by any such argument or appeal. The one pervading idea was

that England had been endangered and shamed by the break-down of her army organisation. When the division took place 305 members voted for Mr. Roebuck's motion and only 148 against. The majority against Ministers was therefore 157. Everyone knows what a scene usually takes place when a Ministry is defeated in the House of Commons. Cheering again and again renewed, counter-cheers of defiance, wild exultation, vehement indignation, a whole whirlpool of various emotions, seething in that little hall in St. Stephen's. But this time there was no such outburst. The House could hardly realise the fact that the Ministry of all the talents had been thus completely and ignominiously defeated. A dead silence followed the announcement of the numbers. Then there was a half-breathless murmur of amazement and incredulity. The Speaker repeated the numbers, and doubt was over. It was still uncertain how the House would express its feelings. Suddenly some one laughed. The sound gave a direction and a relief to perplexed, pent-up emotion. Shouts of laughter followed. Not merely the pledged opponents of the Government laughed. Many of those who had voted with Ministers found themselves laughing too. It seemed so absurd, so incongruous, this way of disposing of the great Coalition Government. Many must have thought of the night of fierce debate, little more than two years before, when Mr. Disraeli, then on the verge of his fall from power and realising fully the strength of the combination against him, consoled his party and himself for the imminent fatality awaiting them by the defiant words, "I know that I have to face a Coalition; the combination may be successful. A combination has before this been successful; but coalitions, though they may be successful, have always found that their triumphs have been brief. This I know, that Eng-

land does not love coalitions." Only two years had passed and the great Coalition had fallen, overwhelmed with reproach and popular indignation, and amid sudden shouts of laughter.

Lord Derby was invited by the Queen to form a Government. He tried and failed. Palmerston did not see his way to join a Derby Administration, and without him Lord Derby could not go on. The Queen then sent for Lord John Russell; but Russell found that he could not get a Government together. Lord Palmerston was then, to use his own phrase, the inevitable. There was not much change in the Ministry. Lord Aberdeen was gone, and Lord Palmerston took his place; and Lord Panmure, who had formerly as Fox Maule administered the affairs of the army, succeeded the Duke of Newcastle. Lord Panmure, however, combined in his own person the functions, up to that time absurdly separated, of Secretary-at-War and Secretary-for-War. It was hoped that by this change great benefit would come to our whole army system. Lord Palmerston acted energetically too in sending out a sanitary commission to the Crimea, and a commission to superintend the commissariat, a department that, almost more than any other, had broken down. Lord Palmerston was strongly pressed by some of the more strenuous Reformers of the House. Mr. Layard, who had acquired some celebrity before in a very different field, as a discoverer, that is to say, in the ruins of Nineveh and Babylon, was energetic and incessant in his attacks on the administration of the war, and was not disposed even now to give the new Government a moment's rest. Mr. Layard was a man of a certain rough ability, immense self-sufficiency, and indomitable egotism. He was not in any sense an eloquent speaker; he was singularly wanting in all the graces of style and manner.

But he was fluent, he was vociferous, he never seemed to have a moment's doubt on any conceivable question, he never admitted that there could by any possibility be two sides to any matter of discussion. He did really know a great deal about the East at a time when the habit of travelling in the East was comparatively rare. He stamped down all doubt or difference of view with the overbearing dogmatism of the proverbial man who has been there and ought to know; and he was in many respects admirably fitted to be the spokesman of all those, and they were not a few, who saw that things had been going wrong without exactly seeing why, and were eager that something should be done, although they did not clearly know what. Lord Palmerston strove to induce the House not to press for the appointment of the committee recommended in Mr. Roebuck's motion. The Government, he said, would make the needful inquiries themselves. Mr. Roebuck, however, would not give way, and Lord Palmerston yielded to a demand which had undoubtedly the support of vast force of public opinion, but his unavoidable concession brought on a new ministerial crisis. Sir James Graham, Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Sidney Herbert declined to hold office any longer. They had opposed the motion for an inquiry most gravely and strenuously, and they would not lend any countenance to it by remaining in office. Sir Charles Wood succeeded Sir James Graham as First Lord of the Admiralty; Lord John Russell took the place of Secretary of the Colonies, vacated by Sidney Herbert; and Sir George Cornewall Lewis followed Mr. Gladstone as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Meanwhile new negotiations for peace, set on foot under the influence of Austria, had been begun at Vienna, and Lord John Russell had been sent there to represent

the interests of England. We had got a new ally in the little kingdom of Sardinia, whose government was then under the control of one of the master-spirits of modern politics, Count Cavour. Sardinia went into war in order that she might have a *locus standi* in the councils of Europe from which to set forth her grievances against Austria. The policy was singularly successful, and entirely justified the expectations of Cavour. The Crimean War laid the foundations of the kingdom of Italy. But there was another event of a very different nature, the effect of which seemed at first likely to be all in favour of peace. On March 2, 1855, the Emperor Nicholas of Russia died of pulmonary apoplexy, after an attack of influenza. A cartoon appeared in *Punch*, which was called "General Février turned Traitor." The Emperor Nicholas had boasted that Russia had two generals on whom she could always rely, General Janvier and General Février; and now the English artist represented General February, a skeleton in Russian uniform, turning traitor and laying his bony ice-cold hand on the heart of the Sovereign and betraying him to the tomb. But indeed it was not General February alone who doomed Nicholas to death. The Czar died of broken hopes; of the recklessness that comes from defeat and despair. He took no precautions against cold and exposure; he treated with a magnanimous disdain the remonstrances of his physicians and his friends. The news of the sudden death of the Emperor created a profound sensation in England. At first there was, as we have said, a common impression that Nicholas's son and successor, Alexander II., would be more anxious to make peace than his father had been. But this hope was soon gone. The new Czar could not venture to show himself to his people in a less patriotic light than his predecessor. The prospects of

the allies were at the time remarkably gloomy. There must have seemed to the new Russian Emperor considerable ground for the hope that disease, and cold, and bad management would do more harm to the army of England at least than any Russian general could do. The Conference at Vienna proved a failure. Lord John Russell, sent to Vienna as our representative, was charged by Mr. Disraeli with having encouraged the Russian pretensions. Sir E. B. Lytton gave notice of a direct vote of censure on "the Minister charged with the negotiations at Vienna." But Russell anticipated the certain effect of a vote in the House of Commons by resigning his office. The vote of censure was withdrawn. Sir William Molesworth, one of the most distinguished of the school who were since called Philosophical Radicals, succeeded him as Colonial Secretary; and the Ministry carried one or two triumphant votes against Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Roebuck, and other opponents, or at least unfriendly critics. Meanwhile the Emperor of the French and his wife had paid a visit to London, and had been received with considerable enthusiasm. The Queen seems to have been very favourably impressed by the Emperor. The Prince Consort seems to have been less impressed. The Prince Consort appears to have judged the Emperor almost exactly as impartial opinion has judged him everywhere in Europe since that time.

The operations in the Crimea were renewed with some vigour. The English army lost much by the death of its brave and manly Commander-in-Chief, Lord Raglan. He was succeeded by General Simpson, whose administration during the short time that he held the command was at least well qualified to keep Lord Raglan's memory green and to prevent the regret for his death from losing any of its keenness. The French army had lost its first

commander long before—the versatile, reckless, brilliant soldier of fortune, St. Arnaud. After St. Arnaud's death the command was transferred for a while to General Canrobert, who resigned it in favour of General Péligssier. The Sardinian contingent had arrived, and had given admirable proof of its courage and discipline. On August 16, 1855, the Russians, under General Liprandi, made an unsuccessful effort to raise the siege of Sebastopol by an attack on the allied forces. The Sardinian contingent bore themselves with stubborn bravery in the resistance, and all Northern Italy was thrown into wild delight by the news that the flag of Piedmont had been carried to victory over the troops of one great European Power, and side by side with those of two others. It was the first great illustration of Cavour's habitual policy of blended audacity and cool, far-seeing judgment. The siege had been progressing for some time with considerable activity. The Malakoff tower and the Mamelon battery in front of it became the scenes and the objects of constant struggle. The Russians made desperate night sorties again and again, and were always repulsed. On June 7 the English assaulted the quarries in front of the Redan, and the French attacked the Mamelon. The attack on both sides was successful; but it was followed on the 18th of the same month by a desperate and wholly unsuccessful attack on the Redan and Malakoff batteries. On September 5 the allies made an attack almost simultaneously upon the Malakoff and the Redan. The French soon got possession of the Malakoff, and the English then at once advanced upon the Redan; but the French were near the Malakoff; the English were very far away from the Redan. The distance our soldiers had to traverse left them almost helplessly exposed to the Russian fire. They stormed the parapets of the Redan despite all the difficulties of their



attack; but they were not able to hold the place. The attacking party were far too small in numbers; reinforcements did not come in time; the English held their own for an hour against odds that might have seemed overwhelming; but it was simply impossible for them to establish themselves in the Redan, and the remnant of them that could withdraw had to retreat to the trenches. It was only the old story of the war. Superb courage and skill of the officers and men; outrageously bad generalship. The attack might have been renewed that day, but the English Commander-in-Chief, General Simpson, resolved not to make another attempt till the next morning. Before the morrow came there was nothing to attack. The Russians withdrew during the night from the south side of Sebastopol. A bridge of boats had been constructed across the bay to connect the north and the south sides of the city, and across this bridge Prince Gortschakoff quietly withdrew his troops. The Russian general felt that it would be impossible for him to hold the city much longer, and that to remain there was only useless waste of life. But, as he said in his own despatch, "It is not Sebastopol which we have left to them, but the burning ruins of the town, which we ourselves set fire to, having maintained the honour of the defence in such a manner that our great-grandchildren may recall with pride the remembrance of it and send it on to all posterity." It was some time before the allies could venture to enter the abandoned city. The arsenals and powder-magazines were exploding, the flames were bursting out of every public building and every private house. The Russians had made of Sebastopol another Moscow.

With the close of that long siege, which had lasted nearly a year, the war may be said to have ended. The

brilliant episode of Kars, its splendid defence and its final surrender, was brought to its conclusion, indeed, after the fall of Sebastopol; but, although it naturally attracted peculiar attention in this country, it could have no effect on the actual fortunes of such a war. Kars was defended by Colonel Fenwick Williams, an English officer, who held the place against overwhelming Russian forces, and against an enemy far more appalling—starvation itself. He had to surrender at last to famine; but the very articles of surrender to which the conqueror consented became the trophy of Williams and his men. The garrison were allowed to leave the place with all the honours of war; and, “as a testimony to the valorous resistance made by the garrison of Kars, the officers of all ranks are to keep their swords.” The war was virtually over. Austria had been exerting herself throughout its progress in the interests of peace, and after the fall of Sebastopol she made a new effort with greater success. France and Russia were indeed now anxious to be out of the struggle almost on any terms. If England had held out, it is highly probable that she would have had to do so alone. For this indeed Lord Palmerston was fully prepared as a last resource, sooner than submit to terms which he considered unsatisfactory. The Congress of Paris opened on February 26, 1856, and on March 30 the treaty of peace was signed by the plenipotentiaries of the Great Powers. Prussia had been admitted to the Congress, which therefore represented England, France, Russia, Austria, Prussia, Turkey and Sardinia.

By the treaty Kars was restored to the Sultan, and Sebastopol and all other places taken by the allies were given back to Russia. The Great Powers engaged to respect the independence and territorial integrity of Turkey. The Sultan issued a firman for ameliorating the

condition of his Christian subjects, and no right of interference, it was distinctly specified, was given to the other Powers by this concession on the Sultan's part. The Black Sea was neutralised; its waters and its ports were thrown open to the mercantile marine of every nation, and formally and in perpetuity interdicted to the flag of war either of the Powers possessing its coasts or of any other Power, with the exception of the right of each of the Powers to have the same number of small armed vessels in the Black Sea to act as a sort of maritime police and to protect the coasts. The Sultan and the Emperor engaged to establish and maintain no military or maritime arsenals in that sea. The navigation of the Danube was thrown open. Moldavia and Wallachia, continuing under the suzerainty of the Sultan, were to enjoy all the privileges and immunities they already possessed under the guarantee of the contracting Powers, but with no separate right of intervention in their affairs. Out of Moldavia and Wallachia united, after various internal changes, there subsequently grew the kingdom of Roumania. The existing position of Servia was secured by the treaty. During time of peace the Sultan engaged to admit no foreign ships of war into the Bosphorus or the Dardanelles.

To guarantee Turkey from the enemy they most feared a tripartite treaty was afterwards agreed to between England, France and Austria. This document bears date in Paris April 15, 1856; by it the contracting parties guaranteed jointly and severally the independence and integrity of the Ottoman empire, and declared that any infraction of the general treaty of March 30 would be considered by them as *casus belli*. The Congress of Paris was remarkable for the fact that the plenipotentiaries before separating came to an agreement on the rules

generally of maritime war by which privateering was abolished. It was agreed, however, that the rules adopted at the Congress of Paris should only be binding on those States that had acceded or should accede to them. The United States raised some difficulty about renouncing the right of privateering, and the declarations of the Congress were therefore made without America's assenting to them. At the instigation of Count Cavour the condition of Italy was brought before the Congress; and there can be no doubt that out of the Congress and the part that Sardinia assumed as representative of Italian nationality came the succession of events which ended in the establishment of a King of Italy in the palace of the Quirinal. The adjustment of the condition of the Danubian principalities too engaged much attention and discussion, and a highly ingenious arrangement was devised for the purpose of keeping those provinces from actual union, so that they might be coherent enough to act as a rampart against Russia, without being so coherent as to cause Austria any alarm for her own somewhat disjointed, not to say distracted, political system. All these artificial and complex arrangements presently fell to pieces, and the principalities became in course of no very long time an united independent State under a hereditary Prince. But for the hour it was hoped that the independence of Turkey and the restriction of Russia, the security of the Christian provinces, the neutrality of the Black Sea, and the closing of the Straits against war vessels, had been bought by the war.

England lost some twenty-four thousand men in the war, of whom hardly a sixth fell in battle or died of wounds. Cholera and other diseases gave grim account of the rest. Forty-one millions of money were added by the campaign to the National Debt. England became

involved in a quarrel with the United States because of our Foreign Enlistment Act. At the close of December 1854 Parliament hurriedly passed an Act authorising the formation of a Foreign Legion for service in the war, and some Swiss and Germans were recruited who never proved of the slightest service. Prussia and America both complained that the zeal of our recruiting functionaries outran the limits of discretion and of law. One of our consuls was actually put on trial at Cologne; and America made a serious complaint of the enlistment of her citizens. England apologised; but the United States were out of temper, and insisted on sending our minister, Mr. Crampton, away from Washington, and some little time passed before the friendly relations of the two States were completely restored.

There was a feeling of disappointment in this country at the close of the war. Our soldiers had done splendidly; but our generals and our system had done poorly indeed. Only one first-class reputation of a military order had come out of the war, and that was by the common consent of the world awarded to a Russian—to General Todleben, the defender of Sebastopol. No new name was made on our side or on that of the French; and some promising or traditional reputations were shattered. The political results of the war were to many minds equally unsatisfying. Lord Aberdeen estimated that it might perhaps secure peace in the East of Europe for some twenty-five years. His modest expectation was prophetic. Indeed it a little overshot the mark. Twenty-two years after the close of the Crimean campaign Russia and Turkey were at war again.

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## CHAPTER XII.

## THE LORCHA "ARROW."—TRANSPORTATION.

AFTER the supposed settlement of the Eastern Question at the Congress of Paris, a sort of languor seems to have come over Parliament and the public mind in England. Lord John Russell proposed a series of resolutions to establish in England a genuine system of national education, which were of course rejected by the House of Commons. Public opinion, both in and out of Parliament, was not nearly ripe for such a principle then. One of the regular attempts to admit the Jews to Parliament was made, and succeeded in the House of Commons, to fail, as usual, in the House of Lords. The House of Lords itself was thrown into great perturbation for a time by the proposal of the Government to confer a peerage for life on one of the judges, Sir James Parke. Lord Lyndhurst strongly opposed the proposal, on the ground that it was the beginning of an attempt to introduce a system of life-peerages, which would destroy the ancient and hereditary character of the House of Lords. The Government, who had really no reactionary or revolutionary designs in their mind, settled the matter for the time by creating Sir James Parke Baron Wensleydale in the usual way, and the object they had in view was quietly accomplished many years later, when the appellate jurisdiction of the Lords was remodelled.

Sir George Lewis was Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was as yet not credited with anything like the political ability which he afterwards proved that he possessed.

It was the fashion to regard him as a mere bookman, who had drifted somehow into Parliament, and who, in the temporary absence of available talent, had been thrust into the office lately held by Mr. Gladstone. The contrast indeed between the style of his speaking and that of Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Disraeli was enough to dishearten any political assembly. Sir George Lewis began by being nearly inaudible, and continued to the last to be oppressed by the most ineffective and unattractive manner and delivery. But it began to be gradually found out that the monotonous, halting, feeble manner covered a very remarkable power of expression; that the speaker had great resources of argument, humour, and illustration; that every sentence contained some fresh idea or some happy expression. After a while the capacity of Lewis ran the risk of being overrated quite as much as it had been undervalued before.

For the present, however, Sir George Lewis was regarded only as the sort of statesman whom it was fitting to have in office just then; the statesman of an interval, in whom no one was expected to take any particular interest. The attention of the public was a good deal distracted from political affairs by the failure and frauds of the Royal British Bank and other frauds, which gave for the time a sort of idea that the financial principles of the country were crumbling to pieces. The culmination of the extraordinary career of John Sadleir was fresh in public memory. This man was the organiser and guiding spirit of the Irish Brigade, a gang of adventurers who got into Parliament and traded on the genuine grievances of their country to get power and money for themselves. John Sadleir embezzled, swindled, forged, and finally escaped justice by committing suicide on Hampstead Heath. The brother of Sadleir was ex-

pelled from the House of Commons; one of his accomplices, who had obtained a Government appointment and had embezzled money, contrived to make his escape to the United States; and the Irish Brigade was broken up. It is only just to say that the best representatives of the Irish Catholics and the Irish national party, in and out of Parliament, had never from the first believed in Sadleir and his band, and had made persistent efforts to expose them.

About this same time Mr. Cyrus W. Field, an energetic American merchant, came over to this country to explain to its leading merchants and scientific men a plan he had for constructing an electric telegraph line underneath the Atlantic. He was listened to with polite curiosity. Mr. Field had, however, a much better reception on the whole than M. de Lesseps, who came to England a few months later to explain his project for constructing a ship canal across the Isthmus of Suez. His proposal was received with coldness, and more than coldness, by engineers, capitalists, and politicians.

The political world seemed to have made up its mind for a season of quiet. Suddenly a storm broke out. The Speech from the Throne at the opening of Parliament, on February 3, 1857, stated that acts of violence, insults to the British flag, and infraction of treaty rights, committed by the local Chinese authorities at Canton, and a pertinacious refusal of redress, had rendered it necessary for her Majesty's officers in China to have recourse to measures of force to obtain satisfaction. The alleged offences of the Chinese authorities at Canton had for their single victim the lorcha *Arrow*. The lorcha *Arrow* was a small boat built on the European model. The word "Lorcha" is taken from the Portuguese settlement at Macao at the mouth of the Canton river. It often oc-



curs in treaties with the Chinese authorities. On October 8, 1856, a party of Chinese in charge of an officer boarded the *Arrow*, in the Canton river. They took off twelve men on a charge of piracy, leaving two men in charge of the lorch. The *Arrow* was declared by its owners to be a British vessel. Our Consul at Canton, Mr. Parkes, demanded from Yeh, the Chinese Governor of Canton, the return of the men, basing his demand upon the Treaty of 1843, supplemental to the Treaty of 1842. This treaty did not give the Chinese authorities any right to seize Chinese offenders, or supposed offenders, on board an English vessel. It merely gave them a right, to require the surrender of the offenders at the hands of the English. The Chinese Governor, Yeh, contended, however, that the lorch was a Chinese private vessel, which had no right whatever to hoist the flag of England. It may be plainly stated at once that the *Arrow* was not an English vessel, but only a Chinese vessel which had obtained by false pretences the temporary possession of a British flag. Mr. Consul Parkes, however, was fussy, and he demanded the instant restoration of the captured men, and he sent off to our Plenipotentiary at Hong Kong, Sir John Bowring, for authority and assistance in the business.

Sir John Bowring was a man of considerable ability. At one time he seemed to be a candidate for something like fame. He had a very large and varied knowledge of European and Asiatic languages, he had travelled a great deal, and had sat in Parliament for some years. He understood political economy, and had a good knowledge of trade and commerce. He had many friends and admirers, and he set up early for a sort of great man. He was full of self-conceit, and without any very clear idea of political principles on the large scale.

Bowring had been Consul for some years at Canton, and he had held the post of chief superintendent of trade there. It would seem as if his eager self-conceit would not allow him to resist the temptation to display himself on the field of political action as a great English plenipotentiary bidding England be of good cheer and compelling inferior races to grovel in the dust before her. He ordered the Chinese authorities to surrender all the men taken from the *Arrow*, and he insisted that an apology should be offered for their arrest, and a formal pledge given by the Chinese authorities that no such act should ever be committed again. If this were not done within forty-eight hours, naval operations were to be begun against the Chinese. The Chinese Governor, Yeh, sent back all the men, and undertook to promise that for the future great care should be taken that no British ship should be visited improperly by Chinese officers. But he could not offer an apology for the particular case of the *Arrow*, for he still maintained, as was indeed the fact, that the *Arrow* was a Chinese vessel, and that the English had nothing to do with her. Accordingly Sir John Bowring carried out his threat, and had Canton bombarded by the fleet which Admiral Sir Michael Seymour commanded. From October 23 to November 13 naval and military operations were kept up continuously. Commissioner Yeh retaliated by foolishly offering a reward for the head of every Englishman.

This news from China created a considerable sensation in England. On February 24, 1857, Lord Derby brought forward in the House of Lords a motion, comprehensively condemning the whole of the proceedings of the British authorities in China. The debate would have been memorable if only for the powerful speech in which the venerable Lord Lyndhurst supported the motion, and

exposed the utter illegality of the course pursued by Sir John Bowring. The House of Lords rejected the motion of Lord Derby by a majority of 146 to 110. On February 26 Mr. Cobden brought forward a similar motion in the House of Commons. This must have been a peculiarly painful task for Mr. Cobden. He was an old friend of Sir John Bowring, with whom he had always supposed himself to have many or most opinions in common. But he followed his convictions as to public duty in despite of his personal friendship. The debate was remarkable more for the singular political combination which it developed as it went on, than even for its varied ability and eloquence. Men spoke and voted on the same side who had probably never been brought into such companionship before and never were afterwards. Mr. Cobden found himself supported by Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli, by Mr. Roebuck and Sir E. B. Lytton, by Lord John Russell and Mr. Whiteside, by Lord Robert Cecil, afterwards the Marquis of Salisbury, Sir Frederick Thesiger, Mr. Roundell Palmer, afterwards Lord Selborne, Mr. Sidney Herbert, and Mr. Milner Gibson. Mr. Cobden had probably never dreamed of the amount or the nature of the support his motion was destined to receive. The vote of censure was carried by 263 votes against 247—a majority of 16.

Lord Palmerston announced two or three days after that the Government had resolved on a dissolution and an appeal to the country. Lord Palmerston understood his countrymen. He knew that a popular Minister makes himself more popular by appealing to the country on the ground that he has been condemned by the House of Commons for upholding the honour of England and coercing some foreign power somewhere. In his address to the electors of Tiverton he declared that an insolent

barbarian, wielding authority at Canton, violated the British flag, broke the engagements of treaties, offered rewards for the heads of British subjects in that part of China, and planned their destruction by murder, assassination, and poison. That of course was all-sufficient. The "insolent barbarian" was in itself almost enough. Governor Yeh certainly was not a barbarian. His argument on the subject of International Law obtained the endorsement of Lord Lyndhurst. His way of arguing the political and commercial case compelled the admiration of Lord Derby. His letters form a curious contrast to the documents contributed to the controversy by the representatives of British authority in China. However, he became for electioneering purposes an insolent barbarian; and the story of a Chinese baker who was said to have tried to poison Sir John Bowring was transfigured into an attempt at the wholesale poisoning of Englishmen in China by the express orders of the Chinese Governor. Lord Palmerston's victory was complete. Cobden, Bright, Milner Gibson, W. J. Fox, Layard, and many other leading opponents of the Chinese policy, were left without seats. Lord Palmerston came back to power with renewed and redoubled strength. A little war with Persia came to an end in time to give him another claim as a conqueror on the sympathies of the constituencies. In the Royal Speech at the opening of Parliament it was announced that the differences between this country and China still remained unadjusted, and that therefore her Majesty had sent to China a Plenipotentiary who would be supported by an adequate naval and military force if necessary. The Government, however, had more serious business with which to occupy themselves before they were at liberty to turn to the easy work of coercing the Chinese.

The new Parliament was engaged for some time in passing the Act abolishing the ancient jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts respecting divorce, and setting up a regular court of law, the Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Court, to deal with questions between husband and wife. The passing of the Divorce Act was strongly contested in both Houses of Parliament, and indeed was secured at last only by Lord Palmerston's intimating very significantly that he would keep the Houses sitting until the measure had been disposed of. Mr. Gladstone, in particular, offered to the bill a most strenuous opposition.

The year 1857 saw the abolition of the system of transportation. Transportation as a means of getting rid of part of our criminal population dates from the time of Charles II., when the judges gave power for the removal of offenders to the North American colonies. It was first regularly introduced into our criminal law in 1717, by an Act of Parliament. In 1787 a cargo of criminals was shipped out to Botany Bay, on the eastern shore of New South Wales, and near Sydney, the present thriving capital of the colony. Afterwards the convicts were also sent to Van Diemen's Land, or Tasmania; and to Norfolk Island, a lonely island in the Pacific, some eight hundred miles from the New South Wales shore. Norfolk Island became the penal settlement for the convicted among convicts; that is to say, criminals who, after transportation to New South Wales, committed new crimes there, might be sent by the Colonial authorities for sterner punishment to Norfolk Island. It looked as if the system ought to be satisfactory in every way and to everybody. The convicts were provided with a new career, a new country, and a chance of reformation. They were usually after a while released from actual durance in the penal settlement, and allowed conditionally to find employment, and

to make themselves, if they could, good citizens. Their labour, it was thought, would be of great service to the colonists. But the colonists very soon began to complain. The convicts who had spent their period of probation in hulks or prisons generally left those homes of horror with nature so brutalised as to make their intrusion into any community of decent persons an insufferable nuisance. Pent up in penal settlements by themselves, the convicts turned into demons; drafted into an inhabited colony, they were too numerous to be wholly absorbed by the population, and they carried their contagion along with them. New South Wales and Tasmania began to protest against being made the refuse-ground for our scoundrelism. Only in Western Australia were the people willing to receive them on any conditions, and Western Australia had but scanty natural resources and could in any case harbour very few of our outcasts. The discovery of gold in Australia settled the question of those colonies being troubled any more with our transportation system; for the greatest enthusiast for transportation would hardly propose to send out gangs of criminals to a region glowing with the temptations of gold.

The question then arose what was England to do with the criminals whom up to that time she had been able to shovel out of her way. All the receptacles were closed but Western Australia, and that counted for almost nothing. In 1853 a bill was brought in by the Ministry to substitute penal servitude for transportation, unless in cases where the sentence was for fourteen years and upwards. The bill reduced the scale of punishment; that is to say, made a shorter period of penal servitude supply the place of a longer term of transportation. Lord Palmerston was Home Secretary at this time. It was during the passing of the bill through the House of Lords

that Lord Grey suggested the introduction of a modification of the ticket-of-leave system which was in practice in the colonies. The principle of the ticket-of-leave was that the convict should not be kept in custody during the whole period of his sentence, but that he should be allowed to pass through a period of conditional liberty before he obtained his full and unrestricted freedom. Now there can be no doubt that the principle of the ticket-of-leave is excellent. But it proved on its first trial in this country the most utter delusion. It got no fair chance at all. It was understood by the whole English public that the object of the ticket-of-leave was to enable the authorities to give a conditional discharge from custody to a man who had in some way proved his fitness for such a relaxation of punishment, and that the eye of the police would be on him even during the period of his conditional release. This was in fact the construction put on the Act in Ireland, where accordingly the ticket-of-leave system was worked with the most complete success under the management of Sir Walter Crofton, chairman of the Board of Prison Directors. A man who had Sir Walter Crofton's ticket-of-leave was known by that very fact to have given earnest of good purpose and steady character. The system in Ireland was therefore all that its authors could have wished it to be. But for some inscrutable reason the Act was interpreted in this country as simply giving every convict a right, after a certain period of detention, to claim a ticket-of-leave, provided he had not grossly violated any of the regulations of the prison or misconducted himself in some outrageous manner.

It would be superfluous to examine the working of such a system. A number of scoundrels whom the judges had sentenced to be kept in durance for so many years

were without any conceivable reason turned loose upon society long before the expiration of their sentence. They were in England literally turned loose upon society, for it was held by the authorities here that it might possibly interfere with the chance of a gaol-bird's getting employment, if he were seen to be watched by the police. The police therefore were considerably ordered to refrain from looking after them. Fifty per cent. of the ruffians released on ticket-of-leave were afterwards brought up for new crimes, and convicted over again. Of those who although not actually convicted were believed to have relapsed into their old habits, from sixty to seventy per cent. relapsed within the first year of their liberation. Baron Bramwell stated from the bench that he had had instances of criminals coming before him who had three sentences overlapping each other. The convict was set free on ticket-of-leave, convicted of some new crime, and re-committed to prison; released again on ticket-of-leave, and convicted once again, before the period of his original sentence had expired. An alarm sprang up in England. The result of the public alarm and the Parliamentary reconsideration of the whole subject was the bill brought in by Sir George Grey in 1857. This measure extended the provisions of the Act of 1853 by substituting in all cases a sentence of penal servitude for one of transportation, abolished the old-fashioned transportation system altogether, but it left the power to the authorities to have penal servitude carried out in any of the colonies where it might be thought expedient. The Government had still some idea of utilising Western Australia for some of our offenders. But nothing came of this plan, or of the clause in the new Act which was passed to favour it; and as a matter of fact transportation was abolished.



How the amended legislation worked in other respects we shall have an opportunity of examining hereafter.

The Gretna Green marriages became illegal in 1857, their doom having been fixed for that time by an Act passed in the previous session. Thenceforward such marriages were unlawful, unless one of the parties had lived at least twenty-one days previously in Scotland.

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### THE INDIAN MUTINY.

IN May 1857 the great Indian Mutiny shook to its foundations the whole fabric of British rule in Hindostan. Throughout the greater part of the north and north-west of the great Indian peninsula there was a rebellion of the native races against English power. It was not by any means a merely military mutiny. It was a combination of military grievance, national hatred and religious fanaticism, against the English occupiers of India. The native princes and the native soldiers were in it. The Mohammedan and the Hindoo forgot their own religious antipathies to join against the Christian. Let us first see what were the actual facts of the outbreak. When the improved (Enfield) rifle was introduced into the Indian army in 1856, the idea got abroad that the cartridges were made up in paper greased with a mixture of cow's fat and hog's lard. It appears that the paper was actually greased, but not with any such material as that which religious alarm suggested to the native troops. Now a mixture of cow's fat and hog's lard would have been, above all things, unsuitable for use in cartridges to be distributed among our Sepoys; for the Hindoo regards the

cow with religious veneration, and the Mohammedan looks upon the hog with utter loathing. In the mind of the former something sacred to him was profaned; in that of the latter something unclean and abominable was forced upon his daily use. Various efforts were made to allay the panic among the native troops. The use of the cartridges complained of was discontinued by orders issued in January 1857. The Governor-General sent out a proclamation in the following May, assuring the army of Bengal that the tales told to them of offence to their religion or injury to their caste being meditated by the Government of India were all malicious inventions and falsehoods. Still the idea was strong among the troops that some design against their religion was meditated. A mutinous spirit began to spread itself abroad. In March some of the native regiments had to be disbanded. In April some executions of Sepoys took place for gross and open mutiny. In the same month several of the native Bengal cavalry in Meerut refused to use the cartridges served out to them, although they had been authoritatively assured that the paper in which the cartridges were wrapped had never been touched by any offensive material. On May 9 these men were sent to the gaol. They had been tried by court-martial, and were sentenced, eighty of them, to imprisonment and hard labour for ten years, the remaining five to a similar punishment for six years. They had chains put on them in the presence of their comrades, who no doubt regarded them as martyrs to their religious faith, and they were thus publicly marched off to the common gaol. The guard placed over the gaol actually consisted of Sepoys.

The following day, Sunday, May 10, was memorable. The native troops in Meerut broke into open mutiny. They fired upon their officers, killed a colonel and others,

broke into the gaol, released their comrades, and massacred several of the European inhabitants. The European troops rallied and drove them from their cantonments or barracks. Then came the momentous event, the turning point of the mutiny: the act that marked out its character, and made it what it afterwards became. Meerut is an important military station between the Ganges and the Jumna, thirty-eight miles north-east from Delhi. In the vast palace of Delhi, almost a city in itself, lived the aged King of Delhi, as he was called; the disestablished, but not wholly disendowed, sovereign, the descendant of the great Timour, the last representative of the Grand Mogul. The mutineers fled along the road to Delhi; and some evil fate directed that they were not to be pursued or stopped on their way. Unchecked, unpursued, they burst into Delhi, and swarmed into the precincts of the palace of the king. They claimed his protection; they insisted upon his accepting their cause and themselves. They proclaimed him Emperor of India, and planted the standard of rebellion against English rule on the battlements of his palace. They had found in one moment a leader, a flag and a cause, and the Mutiny was transfigured into a revolutionary war. The Sepoy troops, in the city and the cantonments on the Delhi ridge, two miles off, and overlooking the city, at once began to cast in their lot with the mutineers. The poor old puppet whom they set up as their emperor was a feeble creature, some eighty years of age. He had long been merely a pensioner of the East India Company. But he was the representative of the great dynasty whose name and effigies had been borne by all the coin of India until some twenty years before. He stood for legitimacy and divine right; and he supplied all the various factions and sects of which the mutiny was com-

posed, or to be composed, with a visible and an acceptable head. If the mutineers flying from Meerut had been promptly pursued and dispersed, or captured, before they reached Delhi, the tale we have to tell might have been shorter and very different. But when they reached, unchecked, the Jumna glittering in the morning light, when they swarmed across the bridge of boats that spanned it, and when at length they clamoured under the windows of the palace that they had come to restore the rule of the Delhi dynasty, they had all unconsciously seized one of the great critical moments of history, and converted a military mutiny into a national and religious war.

This is the manner in which the Indian Rebellion began and assumed its distinct character. Mutinies were not novelties in India. There had been some very serious outbreaks before the time of the greased cartridges. But there was a combination of circumstances at work to bring about this revolt which affected variously but at once the army, the princes, and the populations of India. Let us speak first of the army. The Bengal army was very different in its constitution and conditions from that of Bombay or Madras, the other great divisions of Indian Government at that time. In the Bengal army, the Hindoo Sepoys were far more numerous than the Mohammedans, and were chiefly Brahmins of high caste; while in Madras and Bombay the army was made up, as the Bengal regiments are now, of men of all sects and races without discrimination. Until the very year before the Mutiny the Bengal soldier was only enlisted for service in India, and was exempted from any liability to be sent across the seas; across the black water which the Sepoy dreaded and hated to have to cross. No such exemption was allowed to the soldiers of Bombay or

Madras; and in July 1856 an order was issued by the military authorities to the effect that future enlistments in Bengal should be for service anywhere without limitation. Thus the Bengal Sepoy had not only been put in the position of a privileged and pampered favourite, but he had been subjected to the indignity and disappointment of seeing his privileges taken away from him.

But we must above all other things take into account, when considering the position of the Hindoo Sepoy, the influence of the tremendous institution of caste. An Englishman or European of any country will have to call his imaginative faculties somewhat vigorously to his aid in order to get even an idea of the power of this monstrous superstition. The man who by the merest accident, by the slightest contact with anything that defiled, had lost caste, was excommunicated from among the living, and was held to be for ever more accursed of God. His dearest friend, his nearest relation shrank back from him in alarm and abhorrence. Now, it had become from various causes a strong suspicion in the mind of the Sepoy that there was a deliberate purpose in the minds of the English rulers of the country to defile the Hindoos, and to bring them all to the dead level of one caste or no caste. No doubt there was in many instances a lack of consideration shown for the Hindoo's peculiar and very perplexing tenets. To many a man fresh from the ways of England, the Hindoo doctrines and practices appeared so ineffably absurd that he could not believe any human beings were serious in their devotion to them, and he took no pains to conceal his opinion as to the absurdity of the creed, and the hypocrisy of those who professed it. Some of the elder officers and civilians were imbued very strongly with a conviction that the work of open proselytism was part of

their duty; and in the best faith and with the purest intentions they thus strengthened the growing suspicion that the mind of the authorities was set on the defilement of the Hindoos. Nor was it among the Hindoos alone that the alarm began to be spread abroad. It was the conviction of the Mohammedans that their faith and their rites were to be tampered with as well. It was whispered among them everywhere that the peculiar baptismal custom of the Mohammedans was to be suppressed by law, and Mohammedan women were to be compelled to go unveiled in public. The slightest alterations in any system gave fresh confirmation to the suspicions that were afloat among the Hindoos and Mussulmans. When a change was made in the arrangements of the prisons, and the native prisoners were no longer allowed to cook for themselves, a murmur went abroad that this was the first overt act in the conspiracy to destroy the caste, and with it the bodies and souls of the Hindoos. Another change must be noticed too. At one time it was intended that the native troops should be commanded for the most part by native officers. The men would, therefore, have had something like sufficient security that their religious scruples were regarded and respected. But by degrees the natives were shouldered out of the high positions, until at length it became practically an army of native rank and file commanded by Englishmen. If we remember that a Hindoo sergeant of lower caste would, when off parade, often abase himself with his forehead in the dust before a Sepoy private who belonged to the Brahmin order, we shall have some idea of the perpetual collision between military discipline and religious principle which affected the Hindoo members of an army almost exclusively commanded by Europeans and Christians.

We have spoken of the army and of its religious scruples; we must now speak of the territorial and political influences which affected the princes and the populations of India. Lord Dalhousie had not long left India on the appointment of Lord Canning to the Governor-Generalship when the Mutiny broke out. Lord Dalhousie was a man of commanding energy, of indomitable courage, with the intellect of a ruler of men, and the spirit of a conqueror. He was undoubtedly a great man. He had had some Parliamentary experience in England and in both Houses; and he had been Vice-President and subsequently President of the Board of Trade under Sir Robert Peel. He had taken great interest in the framing of regulations for the railway legislation of the mania season of 1844 and 1845. Towards the close of 1847 Lord Dalhousie was sent out to India. Never was there in any country an administration of more successful activity than that of Lord Dalhousie. He introduced cheap postage into India; he made railways; he set up lines of electric telegraph. He devoted much of his attention to irrigation, to the making of great roads, to the work of the Ganges Canal. He was the founder of a comprehensive system of native education. He put down infanticide, the Thug system, and he carried out with vigour Lord William Bentinck's Act for the suppression of the Suttee or burning of widows on the funeral pile of their husbands. But Lord Dalhousie was not wholly engaged in such works as these. During his few years of office he annexed the Punjaub; he incorporated part of the Burmese territory in our dominions; he annexed Nagpore, Sattara, Jhansi, Berar and Oudh. In the Punjaub the annexation was provoked by the murder of some of our officers, sanctioned, if not actually ordered, by a native prince. Lord Dalhousie marched a

force into the Punjaub. This land, the "land of the five waters," lies at the gateway of Hindostan, and was peopled by Mussulmans, Hindoos, and Sikhs, the latter a new sect of reformed Hindoos. We found arrayed against us not only the Sikhs but our old enemies the Afghans. Lord Gough was in command of our forces. He fought rashly and disastrously the famous battle of Chillianwallah: he was defeated. But he wholly recovered his position by the complete defeat which he inflicted upon the enemy at Goojrat. Never was a victory more complete in itself or more promptly and effectively followed up. The Sikhs were crushed; the Afghans were driven in wild rout back across their savage passes; and Lord Dalhousie annexed the Punjaub. He presented as one token of his conquest the famous diamond, the Koh-i-noor, surrendered in evidence of submission by the Maharajah of Lahore, to the Crown of England.

Lord Dalhousie annexed Oudh on the ground that the East India Company had bound themselves to defend the sovereigns of Oudh against foreign and domestic enemies on condition that the State should be governed in such a manner as to render the lives and property of its population safe; and that while the Company performed their part of the contract, the King of Oudh so governed his dominions as to make his rule a curse to his own people, and to all neighbouring territories. Other excuses or justifications there were of course in the case of each other annexation; and we shall yet hear some more of what came of the annexation of Sattara and Jhansi. If, however, each of these acts of policy were not only justifiable but actually inevitable, none the less must a succession of such acts produce a profound emotion among the races in whose midst they were ac-



completed. The populations of India became stricken with alarm as they saw their native princes thus successively dethroned. The subversion of thrones, the annexation of states, seemed to them naturally enough to form part of that vast scheme for rooting out all the religions and systems of India, concerning which so many vague forebodings had darkly warned the land. Many of our Sepoys came from Oudh and other annexed territories, and little reason as they might have had for any personal attachment to the subverted dynasties, they yet felt that national resentment which any manner of foreign intervention is almost certain to provoke.

There were peculiar reasons too why, if religious and political distrust did prevail, the moment of Lord Canning's accession to the supreme authority in India should seem inviting and favourable for schemes of sedition. The Afghan war had told the Sepoy that British troops are not absolutely invincible in battle. The impression produced almost everywhere in India by the Crimean war was a conviction that the strength of England was on the wane. The Sepoy saw that the English force in Northern India was very small; and he really believed that it was small because England had no more men to send there. In his mind Russia was the great rising and conquering country; England was sinking into decay; her star waning before the strong glare of the portentous northern light. Moreover Lord Canning had hardly assumed office as Governor-General of India, when the dispute occurred between the British and Chinese authorities at Canton, and almost at the same moment war was declared against Persia by proclamation of the Governor-General at Calcutta, in consequence of the Shah having marched an army into Herat and besieged it, in violation of a treaty with Great Britain

made in 1853. A body of troops was sent from Bombay to the Persian Gulf, and shortly after General Outram left Bombay with additional troops, as Commander-in-Chief of the field force in Persia. Therefore, in the opening days of 1857, it was known among the native populations of India that the East India Company was at war with Persia and that England had on her hands a quarrel with China. The native army of the three Presidencies taken together was nearly three hundred thousand, while the Europeans were but forty-three thousand, of whom some five thousand had just been told off for duty in Persia. It must be owned that, given the existence of a seditious spirit, it would have been hardly possible for it to find conditions more seemingly favourable and tempting. There can be no doubt that a conspiracy for the subversion of the English government in India was afoot during the early days of 1857, and possibly for long before. The story of the mysterious *chupatties* is well known. The *chupatties* are small cakes of unleavened bread, and they were found to be distributed with amazing rapidity and precision of system at one time throughout the native villages of the north and north-west. In no instance were they distributed among the populations of still-existing native States. They were only sent among the villages over which English rule extended. A native messenger brought two of these mysterious cakes to the watchman or headman of a village, and bade him to have others prepared like them, and to pass them on to another place. There could be no doubt that the *chupatties* conveyed a warning to all who received them that something strange was about to happen, and bade them to be prepared for whatever might befall.

The news of the outbreak at Meerut, and the pro-

clamation in Delhi, broke upon Calcutta with the shock of a thunder clap. For one or two days Calcutta was a prey to mere panic. The alarm was greatly increased by the fact that the dethroned King of Oudh was living near to the city, at Garden Reach, a few miles down the Hooghly. The inhabitants of Calcutta, when the news of the Mutiny came, were convinced that the palace of the King of Oudh was the head-quarters of rebellion, and were expecting the moment when, from the residence at Garden Reach, an organised army of murderers was to be sent forth to capture and destroy the ill-fated city, and to make its streets run with the blood of its massacred inhabitants. Lord Canning took the prudent course of having the king with his prime minister removed to the Governor-General's own residence within the precincts of Fort William. If ever the crisis found the man, Lord Canning was the man called for by that crisis in India. He had all the divining genius of the true statesman; the man who can rise to the height of some unexpected and new emergency; and he had the cool courage of a practised conqueror. Among all the distracting counsels and wild stories poured in upon him from every side, he kept his mind clear. He never gave way either to anger or to alarm. If he ever showed a little impatience, it was only where panic would too openly have proclaimed itself by counsels of wholesale cruelty. He could not, perhaps, always conceal from frightened people the fact that he rather despised their terrors. Throughout the whole of that excited period there were few names, even among the chiefs of rebellion, on which fiercer denunciation was showered by Englishmen than the name of Lord Canning. Because he would not listen to the bloodthirsty clamours of mere frenzy, he was nicknamed "Clemency Canning," as if

clemency were an attribute of which a man ought to be ashamed. Indeed, for some time people wrote and spoke, not merely in India but in England, as if clemency were a thing to be reprobated, like treason or crime. For a while it seemed a question of patriotism which would propose the most savage and sanguinary measures of revenge. Mr. Disraeli, to do him justice, raised his voice in remonstrance against the wild passions of the hour, even when these passions were strongest and most general. He declared that if such a temper were encouraged we ought to take down from our altars the image of Christ and raise the statue of Moloch there. If people were so carried away in England, where the danger was far remote, we can easily imagine what were the fears and passions roused in India, where the terror was or might be at the door of everyone. Lord Canning was gravely embarrassed by the wild urgencies and counsels of distracted Englishmen, who were furious with him because he even thought of distinguishing friend from foe where native races were concerned. But he bore himself with perfect calmness. He was greatly assisted and encouraged in his counsels by his brave and noble wife, who proved herself in every way worthy to be the helpmate of such a man at such a crisis. He did not for a moment under-estimate the danger; but neither did he exaggerate its importance. He never allowed it to master him. He looked upon it with the quiet, resolute eye of one who is determined to be the conqueror in the struggle.

Lord Canning saw that the one important thing was to strike at Delhi, which had proclaimed itself the headquarters of the rebellion. He knew that English troops were on their way to China for the purpose of wreaking the wrongs of English subjects there, and he took on his

own responsibility the bold step of intercepting them, and calling them to the work of helping to put down the Mutiny in India. The dispute with China he thought could well afford to wait, but with the Mutiny it must be now or never. India could not wait for reinforcements brought all the way from England. Lord Canning knew well enough, as well as the wildest alarmist could know, that the rebel flag must be forced to fly from some field before that help came, or it would fly over the dead bodies of those who then represented English authority in India. He had, therefore, no hesitation in appealing to Lord Elgin, the Envoy in charge of the Chinese expedition, to stop the troops that were on their way to China, and lend them to the service of India at such a need. Lord Elgin had the courage and the wisdom to assent to the appeal at once. Fortune, too, was favourable to Canning in more ways than one. The Persian war was of short duration. Sir James Outram was soon victorious, and Outram, therefore, and his gallant companions, Colonel Jacob and Colonel Havelock, were able to lend their invaluable services to the Governor-General of India. Most important for Lord Canning's purposes was the manner in which the affairs of the Punjaub were managed at this crisis. The Punjaub was under the administration of one of the ablest public servants India has ever had—Sir John, afterwards Lord Lawrence. John Lawrence had from his youth been in the Civil Service of the East India Company; and when Lord Dalhousie annexed the Punjaub, he made Lawrence and his soldier-brother—the gallant Sir Henry Lawrence—two out of a board of three for the administration of the affairs of the newly-acquired province. Afterwards Sir John Lawrence was named the Chief Commissioner of the Punjaub, and by the promptitude and energy of himself and his

subordinates, the province was completely saved for English rule at the outbreak of the Mutiny. Fortunately, the electric telegraph extended from Calcutta to Lahore, the chief city of the Punjab. On May 11 the news of the outbreak at Meerut was brought to the authorities at Lahore. As it happened, Sir John Lawrence was then away at Rawul Pindee, in the Upper Punjab; but Mr. Robert Montgomery, the Judicial Commissioner at Lahore, was invested with plenary power, and he showed that he could use it to advantage. Meean Meer is a large military cantonment five or six miles from Lahore, and there were then some four thousand native troops there, with only about thirteen hundred Europeans of the Queen's and the Company's service. There was no time to be lost. While the Punjab held firm it was like a barrier raised at one side of the rebellious movement, not merely preventing it from going any farther in that direction, but keeping it pent up until the moment came when the blow from the other direction could fall upon it. The first thing to be done to strike effectively at the rebellion was to make an attack on Delhi; and the possession of the Punjab was of inestimable advantage to the authorities for that purpose. There was no actual reason to assume that the Sepoys in Meean Meer intended to join the rebellion. There would be a certain danger of converting them into rebels if any rash movement were to be made for the purpose of guarding against treachery on their part. Either way was a serious responsibility, a momentous risk. The authorities soon made up their minds. Any risk would be better than that of leaving it in the power of the native troops to join the rebellion. A ball and supper were to be given at Lahore that night. To avoid creating any alarm it was arranged that the entertainments should take place. During the dancing

and feasting Mr. Montgomery held a council of the leading officials of Lahore, civil and military, and it was resolved at once to disarm the native troops. A parade was ordered for daybreak at Meean Meer; and on the parade ground an order was given for a military movement which brought the heads of four columns of the native troops in front of twelve guns charged with grape, the artillerymen with their port-fires lighted, and the soldiers of one of the Queen's regiments standing behind with loaded muskets. A command was given to the Sepoys to pile arms. They had immediate death before them if they disobeyed. They stood literally at the cannon's mouth. They piled their arms, which were borne away at once in carts by European soldiers, and all chances of a rebellious movement were over in that province, and the Punjaub was saved. Something of the same kind was done at Mooltan, in the Lower Punjaub, later on; and the province, thus assured to English civil and military authority, became a basis for some of the most important operations by which the Mutiny was crushed, and the sceptre of India restored to the Queen.

Within little more than a fortnight from the occupation of Delhi by the rebels, the British forces under General Anson, the Commander-in-Chief, were advancing on that city. The commander did not live to conduct any of the operations. He died of cholera almost at the beginning of the march. The siege of Delhi proved long and difficult. Another general died, another had to give up his command, before the city was recaptured. It was justly considered by Lord Canning and by all the authorities as of the utmost importance that Delhi should be taken before the arrival of great reinforcements from home. Meanwhile the rebellion was breaking out at new points almost everywhere in these northern and north-

western regions. On May 30 the Mutiny declared itself at Lucknow. Sir Henry Lawrence was governor of Oudh. He endeavoured to drive the rebels from the place, but the numbers of the mutineers were overwhelming. He had under his command, too, a force partly made up of native troops, and some of these deserted him in the battle. He had to retreat and to fortify the Residency at Lucknow, and remove all the Europeans, men, women, and children thither, and patiently stand a siege. Lawrence himself had not long to endure the siege. On July 2 he had been up with the dawn, and after a great amount of work he lay on the sofa, not, as it has been well said, to rest, but to transact business in a recumbent position. His nephew and another officer were with him. Suddenly a great crash was heard, and the room was filled with smoke and dust. One of his companions was flung to the ground. A shell had burst. When there was silence the officer who had been flung down called out, "Sir Henry, are you hurt?" "I am killed," was the answer that came faintly but firmly from Sir Henry Lawrence's lips. The shell had wounded him in the thigh so fearfully as to leave surgery no chance of doing anything for his relief. On the morning of July 4 he died calmly and in perfect submission to the will of Providence. He had made all possible arrangements for his successor, and for the work to be done. He desired that on his tomb should be engraven merely the words, "Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty." The epitaph was a simple truthful summing up of a simple truthful career. The man, however, was greater than the career. Lawrence had not opportunity to show in actual result the greatness of spirit that was in him. The immense influence he exercised over all who came



within his reach bears testimony to his strength and nobleness of character better than any of the mere successes which his biographer can record. He was full of sympathy. His soul was alive to the noblest and purest aspirations. "It is the due admixture of romance and reality," he was himself accustomed to say, "that best carries a man through life." No professional teacher or philosopher ever spoke a truer sentence. As one of his many admirers says of him—"what he said and wrote, he did, or rather he was." Let the bitterest enemy of England write the history of her rule in India, and set down as against her every wrong that was done in her name, from those which Burke denounced to those which the Madras Commission exposed, he will have to say that men, many men, like Henry Lawrence, lived and died devoted to the cause of that rule, and the world will take account of the admission.

During the later days of Sir Henry Lawrence's life it had another trouble added to it by the appeals which were made to him from Cawnpore for a help which he could not give. The city of Cawnpore stands in the Doab, a peninsula between the Ganges and the Jumna, and is built on the south bank of the Ganges, there nearly a quarter of a mile broad in the dry season, and more than a mile across when swelled by the rains. In 1801, the territory lapsed into the possession of the Company. From that time it took rank as one of our first-class military stations. The city commanded the bridge over which passed the high road to Lucknow, the capital of our new province. The distance from Cawnpore to Lucknow is about fifty miles as the bird flies. At the time when the Mutiny broke out in Meerut there were some three thousand native soldiers in Cawnpore, consisting of two regiments of infantry, one of cavalry, and

a company of artillerymen. There were about three hundred officers and soldiers of English birth. The European or Eurasian population, including women and children, numbered about one thousand. These consisted of the officials, the railway people, some merchants and shopkeepers and their families. The native town had about sixty thousand inhabitants. The garrison was under the command of Sir Hugh Wheeler, a man of some seventy-five years of age, among the oldest of an old school of Bengal officers. The revolt was looked for at Cawnpore from the moment when the news came of the rising at Meerut; and it was not long expected before it came. Sir Hugh Wheeler applied to Sir Lawrence for help; Lawrence of course could not spare a man. Then Sir Hugh Wheeler remembered that he had a neighbour whom he believed to be friendly, despite of very recent warnings from Sir Henry Lawrence and others to the contrary. He called this neighbour to his assistance, and his invitation was promptly answered. The Nana Sahib came with two guns and some three hundred men to lend a helping hand to the English commander.

The Nana Sahib resided at Bithoor, a small town twelve miles up the river from Cawnpore. He represented a grievance. Bajee Rao, Peishwa of Poonah, was the last prince of one of the great Mahratta dynasties. The East India Company believed him guilty of treachery against them, of bad government of his dominions, and so forth; and they found a reason for dethroning him. He was assigned, however, a residence in Bithoor, and a large pension. He had no children, and he adopted as his heir Seereek Dhoondoo Punth, the man who will be known to all time by the infamous name of Nana Sahib. According to Hindoo belief it is needful for a man's

eternal welfare that he leave a son behind him to perform duly his funeral rites; and the adoption of a son is recognised as in every sense conferring on the adopted all the rights that a child of the blood could have. Bajee died in 1851, and Nana Sahib claimed to succeed to all his possessions. Lord Dalhousie had shown in many instances a strangely unwise disregard of the principle of adoption. The claim of the Nana to the pension was disallowed. Nana Sahib sent a confidential agent to London to push his claim there. This man was a clever and handsome young Mohammedan who had at one time been a servant in an Anglo-Indian family, and had picked up a knowledge of French and English. His name was Azimoolah Khan. This emissary visited London in 1854, and became a lion of the fashionable season. He did not succeed in winning over the Government to take any notice of the claims of his master, but being very handsome and of sleek and alluring manners, he became a favourite in the drawing-rooms of the metropolis, and was under the impression that an unlimited number of Englishwomen of rank were dying with love for him. On his way home he visited Constantinople and the Crimea. It was then a dark hour for the fortunes of England in the Crimea, and Azimoolah Khan swallowed with glad and greedy ear all the alarmist rumours that were afloat in Stamboul about the decay of England's strength and the impending domination of Russian power over Europe and Asia. The Western visit of this man was not an event without important consequences. He doubtless reported to his master that the strength of England was on the wane; and while stimulating his hatred and revenge, stimulated also his confidence in the chances of an effort to gratify both. With Azimoolah Khan's mission and its results ended the hopes of Nana Sahib for the success of

his claims, and began, we may presume, his resolve to be revenged.

Nana Sahib, although his claim on the English Government was not allowed, was still rich. He had the large private property of the man who had adopted him, and he had the residence at Bithoor. He kept up a sort of princely state. He never visited Cawnpore; the reason being, it is believed, that he would not have been received there with princely honours. But he was especially lavish of his attentions to English visitors, and his invitations went far and wide among the military and civil servants of the Crown and the Company. He cultivated the society of English men and women; he showered his civilities upon them. He did not speak or even understand English, but he took a great interest in English history, customs, and literature. He was luxurious in the most thoroughly Oriental fashion; and Oriental luxury implies a great deal more than any experience of Western luxury would suggest. At the time with which we are dealing he was only about thirty-six years of age, but he was prematurely heavy and fat, and seemed to be as incapable of active exertion as of unkindly feeling. There can be little doubt that all this time he was a dissembler of more than common Eastern dissimulation. It appears almost certain that while he was lavishing his courtesies and kindnesses upon Englishmen without discrimination, his heart was burning with a hatred to the whole British race. A sense of his wrongs had eaten him up. It is a painful thing to say, but it is necessary to the truth of this history, that his wrongs were genuine. He had been treated with injustice. According to all the recognised usages of his race and his religion, he had a claim indefeasible in justice to the succession which had been unfairly and unwisely denied to him. It was to Nana

Sahib, then, that poor old Sir Hugh Wheeler in the hour of his distress applied for assistance. Most gladly, we can well believe, did the Nana come. He established himself in Cawnpore with his guns and his soldiers. Sir Hugh Wheeler had taken refuge, when the Mutiny broke out, in an old military hospital with mud walls, scarcely four feet high, hastily thrown up around it, and a few guns of various calibre placed in position on the so-called entrenchments. Within these almost shadowy and certainly crumbling entrenchments were gathered about a thousand persons, of whom 465 were men of every age and profession. The married women and grown daughters were about 280; the children about the same number. Of the men there were probably 400 who could fight.

As soon as Nana Sahib's presence became known in Cawnpore he was surrounded by the mutineers, who insisted that he must make common cause with them and become one of their leaders. He put himself at their disposal. He gave notice to Sir Hugh Wheeler that if the entrenchments were not surrendered, they would be instantly attacked. They were attacked. A general assault was made upon the miserable mud walls on June 12, but the resistance was heroic and the assault failed. It was after that assault that the garrison succeeded in sending a message to Sir Henry Lawrence at Lucknow, craving for the aid which it was absolutely impossible for him to give. From that time the fire of the mutineer army on the English entrenchments never ceased. Whenever a regular attack was made the assailants invariably came to grief. The little garrison, thinning in numbers every day and almost every hour, held out with splendid obstinacy, and always sent those who assailed it scampering back—except of course for such assailants

as perforce kept their ground by the persuasion of the English bullets. The little population of women and children behind the entrenchments had no roof to shelter them from the fierce Indian sun. They cowered under the scanty shadow of the low walls often at the imminent peril of the unceasing Sepoy bullets. The only water for their drinking was to be had from a single well, at which the guns of the assailants were unceasingly levelled. To go to the well and draw water became the task of self-sacrificing heroes, who might with better chances of safety have led a forlorn hope. The water which the fainting women and children drank might have seemed to be reddened by blood; for only at the price of blood was it ever obtained. It may seem a trivial detail, but it will count for much in a history of the sufferings of delicately nurtured English women, that from the beginning of the siege of the Cawnpore entrenchments to its tragic end, there was not one spongeful of water to be had for the purposes of personal cleanliness. The inmates of that ghastly garrison were dying like flies. One does not know which to call the greater; the suffering of the women or the bravery of the men.

A conviction began to spread among the mutineers that it was of no use attempting to conquer these terrible British sahibs; that so long as one of them was alive he would be as formidable as a wild beast in its lair. The Sepoys became unwilling to come too near the low crumbling walls of the entrenchment. Those walls might have been leaped over as easily as that of Romulus; but of what avail to know that, when from behind them always came the fatal fire of the Englishmen? It was no longer easy to get the mutineers to attempt anything like an assault. The English themselves began to show a perplexing kind of aggressive enterprise, and took to

making little sallies in small numbers indeed, but with astonishing effect, on any bodies of Sepoys who happened to be anywhere near. Utterly, overwhelmingly, preposterously outnumbered as the Englishmen were, there were moments when it began to seem almost possible that they might actually keep back their assailants until some English army could come to their assistance and take a terrible vengeance upon Cawnpore. Nana Sahib began to find that he could not take by assault those wretched entrenchments; and he could not wait to starve the garrison out. He therefore resolved to treat with the English. The terms, it is believed, were arranged by the advice and assistance of Tantia Topee, his lieutenant, and Azimoolah Khan, the favourite of English drawing-rooms. An offer was sent to the entrenchments, the terms of which are worthy of notice. "All those," it said, "who are in no way connected with the acts of Lord Dalhousie, and who are willing to lay down their arms, shall receive a safe passage to Allahabad." The terms had to be accepted. There was nothing else to be done. The English people were promised, during the course of the negotiations, sufficient supplies of food and boats to carry them to Allahabad, which was now once more in the possession of England. The relief was unspeakable for the survivors of that weary defence. The women, the children, the wounded, the sick, the dying, welcomed any terms of release. Not the faintest suspicion crossed any mind of the treachery that was awaiting them. How, indeed, could there be any such suspicion? Not for years and years had even Oriental warfare given example of such practice as that which Nana Sahib and the graceful and civilised Azimoolah Khan had now in preparation.

The time for the evacuation of the garrison came.

The boats were in readiness on the Ganges. The long procession of men, women, and children passed slowly down; very slowly in some instances, because of the number of sick and wounded by which its progress was encumbered. Some of the chief among the Nana's counsellors took their stand in a little temple on the margin of the river, to superintend the embarkation and the work that was to follow it. Nana Sahib himself was not there. It is understood that he purposely kept away; he preferred to hear of the deed when it was done. His faithful lieutenant, Tantia Topee, had given orders, it seems, that when a trumpet sounded, some work, for which he had arranged, should begin. The wounded and the women were got into the boats in the first instance. The officers and men were scrambling in afterwards. Suddenly the blast of a trumpet was heard. The boats were of the kind common on the rivers of India, covered with roofs of straw, and looking, as some accounts describe them, not unlike floating haystacks. The moment the bugle sounded, the straw of the boat-roofs blazed up, and the native rowers began to make precipitately for the shore. They had set fire to the thatch, and were now escaping from the flames they had purposely lighted up. At the same moment there came from both shores of the river thick showers of grapeshot and musketry. The banks of the Ganges seemed in an instant alive with shot; a very rain of bullets poured in upon the devoted inmates of the boats. To add to the horrors of the moment, if, indeed, it needed any addition, nearly all the boats stuck fast in mudbanks, and the occupants became fixed targets for the fire of their enemies. Only three of the boats floated. Two of these drifted to the Oudh shore, and those on board them were killed at once. The third floated farther along with



the stream, reserved for further adventures and horrors. The firing ceased when Tantia Topee and his confederates thought that enough had been done; and the women and children who were still alive were brought ashore and carried in forlorn procession back again through the town where they had suffered so much, and which they had hoped that they were leaving for ever. They were about 125 in number, women and children. Some of them were wounded. There were a few well-disposed natives who saw them and were sorry for them; who had perhaps served them, and experienced their kindness in other days, and who now had some grateful memory of it, which they dared not express by any open profession of sympathy. Certain of these afterwards described the English ladies as they saw them pass. They were bedraggled and dishevelled, these poor English women; their clothes were in tatters; some of them were wounded, and the blood was trickling from their feet and legs. They were carried to a place called the Savada House, a large building, once a charitable institution bearing the name of Salvador, which had been softened into Savada by Asiatic pronunciation. On board the one boat which had floated with the stream were more than a hundred persons. The boat was attacked by a constant fire from both banks as it drifted along. At length a party of some twelve men, or thereabouts, landed with the bold object of attacking their assailants and driving them back. In their absence the boat was captured by some of the rebel gangs, and the women and the wounded were brought back to Cawnpore. Some sixty men, twenty-five women, and four children were thus recaptured. The men were immediately shot. It may be said at once, that of the gallant little party who went ashore to attack the enemy, hand to hand, four finally escaped,

after adventures so perilous and so extraordinary that a professional story-teller would hardly venture to make them part of a fictitious narrative.

The Nana had now a considerable number of English women in his hands. They were removed, after a while, from their first prison-house to a small building north of the canal, and between the native city and the Ganges. Here they were cooped up in the closest manner, except when some of them were taken out in the evening and set to the work of grinding corn for the use of their captors. Cholera and dysentery set in among these unhappy sufferers, and some eighteen women and seven children died. Let it be said for the credit of womanhood, that the royal widows, the relicts of the Nana's father by adoption, made many efforts to protect the captive Englishwomen, and even declared that they would throw themselves and their children from the palace windows if any harm were done to the prisoners. We have only to repeat here, that as a matter of fact no indignities, other than that of the compulsory corn-grinding, were put upon the English ladies. They were doomed, one and all, to suffer death, but they were not, as at one time was believed in England, made to long for death as an escape from shame. Meanwhile the prospects of the Nana and his rebellion were growing darker and darker. He must have begun to know by this time that he had no chance of establishing himself as a ruler anywhere in India. The English had not been swept out of the country with a rush. The first flood of the Mutiny had broken on their defences, and already the tide was falling. The Nana well knew it never would rise again to the same height in his day. The English were coming on. Neill had recaptured Allahabad, and cleared the country all round it of any traces of rebellion. Have-

lock was now moving forward from Allahabad towards Cawnpore, with six cannon and about a thousand English soldiers. Very small in point of numbers was that force when compared with that which Nana Sahib could even still rally round him; but no one in India now knew better than Nana Sahib what extraordinary odds the English could afford to give with the certainty of winning. Havelock's march was a series of victories, although he was often in such difficulties that the slightest display of real generalship or even soldiership on the part of his opponents might have stopped his advance. He had one encounter with the lieutenant of the Nana, who had under his command nearly four thousand men and twelve guns, and Havelock won a complete victory in about ten minutes. He defeated in the same off-hand way various other chiefs of the Mutiny. He was almost at the gates of Cawnpore.

Then it appears to have occurred to the Nana, or to have been suggested to him, that it would be inconvenient to have his English captives recaptured by the enemy, their countrymen. It may be that in the utter failure of all his plans and hopes he was anxious to secure some satisfaction, to satiate his hatred in some way. It was intimated to the prisoners that they were to die. Among them were three or four men. These were called out and shot. Then some Sepoys were sent to the house where the women still were, and ordered to fire volleys through the windows. This they did, but apparently without doing much harm. Some persons are of opinion, from such evidence as can be got, that the men purposely fired high above the level of the floor, to avoid killing any of the women and children. In the evening five men, two Hindoo peasants, two Mohammedan butchers, and one Mohammedan wearing the red uniform

of the Nana's body-guard, were sent up to the house, and entered it. Incessant shrieks were heard to come from that fearful house. The Mohammedan soldier came out to the door holding in his hand a sword-hilt from which the blade had been broken off, and he exchanged this now useless instrument for a weapon in proper condition. Not once but twice this performance took place. Evidently the task imposed on these men was hard work for the sword-blades. After a while the five men came out of the now quiet house and locked the doors behind them. During that time they had killed nearly all the English women and children. They had slaughtered them like beasts in the shambles. In the morning the five men came again with several attendants to clear out the house of the captives. Their task was to tumble all the bodies into a dry well beyond some trees that grew near. Any of the bodies that had clothes worth taking were carefully stripped before being consigned to this open grave. When Cawnpore was afterwards taken by the English those who had to look down into that well saw a sight the like of which no man in modern days had ever seen elsewhere. No attempt shall be made to describe it here. When the house of the massacre itself was entered, its floors and its walls told with terrible plainness of the scene they had witnessed. The plaster of the walls was scored and seamed with sword-slashes low down and in the corners, as if the poor women had crouched down in their mortal fright with some wild hope of escaping the blows. The floor was strewn with scraps of dresses, women's faded ragged finery, frilling, underclothing, broken combs, shoes, and tresses of hair. There were some small and neatly severed curls of hair too which had fallen on the ground, but evidently had never been cut off by the rude weapon of a professional

butcher. These doubtless were keepsakes that had been treasured to the last, parted with only when life and all were going. One or two scraps of paper were found which recorded deaths and such like interruptions of the monotony of imprisonment; but nothing more. The well of horrors has since been filled up, and a memorial chapel surrounded by a garden built upon the spot.

Something, however, has still to be told of the Nana and his fortunes. He made one last stand against the victorious English in front of Cawnpore, and was completely defeated. He galloped into the city on a bleeding and exhausted horse; he fled thence to Bithoor, his residence. He had just time left, it is said, to order the murder of a separate captive, a woman who had previously been overlooked or purposely left behind. Then he took flight in the direction of the Nepaulese marches; and he soon disappears from history. Nothing of his fate was ever known. Many years afterwards England and India were treated to a momentary sensation by a story of the capture of Nana Sahib. But the man who was arrested proved to be an entirely different person; and indeed from the moment of his arrest few believed him to be the long-lost murderer of the English women. In days more superstitious than our own, popular faith would have found an easy explanation of the mystery which surrounded the close of Nana Sahib's career. He had done, it would have been said, the work of a fiend; and he had disappeared as a fiend would do when his task was accomplished.

The capture of Delhi was effected on September 20. Brigadier-General Nicholson led the storming columns, and paid for his bravery and success the price of a gallant life. Nicholson was one of the bravest and most capable officers whom the war produced. It is worthy

of record as an evidence of the temper aroused even in men from whom better things might have been expected, that Nicholson strongly urged the passing of a law to authorise flaying alive, impalement, or burning of the murderers of the women and children in Delhi. He urged this view again and again, and deliberately argued it on grounds alike of policy and principle. The fact is recorded here not in mere disparagement of a brave soldier, but as an illustration of the manner in which the old elementary passions of man's untamed condition can return upon him in his pride of civilisation and culture, and make him their slave again. The taking of Delhi was followed by an act of unpardonable bloodshed. A young officer, Hodson, the leader of the little force known as Hodson's Horse, was acting as chief of the Intelligence Department. He was especially distinguished by an extraordinary blending of cool, calculating craft and reckless daring. By the help of native spies Hodson discovered that when Delhi was taken the king and his family had taken refuge in the tomb of the Emperor Hoomayoon, a structure which, with the buildings surrounding and belonging to it, constituted a sort of suburb in itself. Hodson went boldly to this place with a few of his troopers and captured the three royal princes of Delhi. He tried them as rebels taken red-handed, and borrowing a carbine from one of his troopers, he shot them dead with his own hand. Their corpses, half-naked, were exposed for some days at one of the gates of Delhi. Hodson was killed not long after; we might well wish to be free to allow him to rest without censure in his untimely grave. He was a brave and clever soldier, but one who unfortunately allowed a fierce temper to over-rule the better instincts of his nature and the guidance of a cool judgment.

General Havelock made his way to the relief of

Lucknow. Sir James Outram, who had returned from Persia, had been sent to Oudh with complete civil and military authority. He would in the natural order of things have superseded Havelock, but he refused to rob a brave and successful comrade of the fruits of his toil and peril, and he accompanied Havelock as a volunteer. Havelock was enabled to continue his victorious march, and on September 25 he was able to relieve the besieged English at Lucknow. His coming, it can hardly be doubted, saved the women and children from such a massacre as that of Cawnpore; but Havelock had not the force that might have driven the rebels out of the field, and if England had not been prepared to make greater efforts for the rescue of her imperilled people, it is but too probable that the troops whom Havelock brought to the relief of Lucknow would only have swelled the number of the victims. But in the meantime the stout soldier, Sir Colin Campbell, whom we have already heard of in the Crimean campaign, had been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Indian forces, and had arrived in India. He set out for Lucknow. He had under his command only some 5,000 men, a force miserably inferior in number to that of the enemy; but in those days an English officer thought himself in good condition to attack if the foe did not outnumber him by more than four or five to one. A series of actions was fought by Sir Colin Campbell and his little force attacking the enemy on one side, who were attacked at the same time by the besieged garrison of the residency. On the morning of November 17, by the combined efforts of both forces, the enemy was dislodged. Sir Colin Campbell resolved, however, that the residency must be evacuated; and accordingly on the 19th heavy batteries were opened against the enemy's position, as if for the purpose of assault, and

under cover of this operation the women, the sick, and the wounded were quietly removed to the Dilkoosha, a small palace in a park about five miles from the residency, which had been captured by Sir Colin Campbell on his way to attack the city. By midnight of the 22nd the whole garrison, without the loss of a single man, had left the residency. Two or three days more saw the troops established at Alumbagh, some four miles from the residency, in another direction from that of the Dilkoosha.

Alumbagh is an isolated cluster of buildings, with grounds and enclosure to the south of Lucknow. The name of this place is memorable for ever in the history of the war. It was there that Havelock closed his glorious career. He was attacked with dysentery, and died on November 24. The Queen created him a baronet, or rather affixed that honour to his name on the 27th of the same month, not knowing then that the soldier's time for struggle and for honour was over. The title was transferred to his son, the present Sir Henry Havelock, who had fought gallantly under his father's eyes. The fame of Havelock's exploits reached England only a little in advance of the news of his death. So many brilliant deeds had seldom in the history of our wars been crowded into days so few. All the fame of that glorious career was the work of some strenuous splendid weeks. Havelock's promotion had been slow. He had not much for which to thank the favour of his superiors. No family influence, no powerful patrons had made his slow progress more easy. He was more than sixty when the mutiny broke out. He was born in April 1795; he was educated at the Charterhouse, London, where his grave, studious ways procured for him the nickname of "Old Philos"—the schoolboy's "short" for "old philosopher."



He went out to India in 1823, and served in the Burmese war of 1824, and the Sikh war of 1845. He was a man of grave and earnest character, a Baptist by religion, and strongly penetrated with a conviction that the religious spirit ought to pervade and inform all the duties of military as well as civil life. By his earnestness and his example he succeeded in animating those whom he led with similar feelings; and "Havelock's saints" were well known through India by this distinctive appropriate title. "Havelock's saints" showed, whenever they had an opportunity, that they could fight as desperately as the most reckless sinners; and their commander found the fame flung in his way, across the path of his duty, which he never would have swerved one inch from that path to seek. Amid all the excitement of hope and fear, passion and panic, in England, there was time for the whole heart of the nation to feel pride in Havelock's career and sorrow for his untimely death. Untimely? Was it after all untimely? Since when has it not been held the crown of a great career that the hero dies at the moment of accomplished victory?

Sir Colin Campbell left General Outram in charge of Alumbagh, and himself hastened towards Cawnpore. A large hostile force, composed chiefly of the revolted army of Scindia, the ruler of Gwalior, had marched upon Cawnpore. General Windham, who held the command there, had gone out to attack them. He was compelled to retreat, not without severe loss, to his entrenchments at Cawnpore, and the enemy occupied the city itself. Sir Colin Campbell attacked the rebels at one place; Sir Hope Grant attacked them at another, and Cawnpore was retaken. Sir Colin Campbell then turned his attention to reconquering the entire city of Lucknow. It was not until March 19, 1858, that Lucknow fell completely

into the hands of the English. Our operations had been almost entirely by artillery, and had been conducted with consummate prudence as well as boldness, and our loss was therefore very small, while the enemy suffered most severely. Among our wounded was the gallant leader of the naval brigade, Sir William Peel, son of the great statesman. Sir William Peel died at Cawnpore shortly after, of small-pox, his death remarked and lamented even amid all the noble deaths of that eventful time. One name must not be forgotten among those who endured the siege of Lucknow. It is that of Dr. Brydon, whom we last saw as he appeared under the walls of Jellalabad, the one survivor come back to tell the tale of the disastrous retreat from Cabul.

Practically, the reconquest of Lucknow was the final blow in the suppression of the great Bengal mutiny. Some episodes of the war, however, were still worthy of notice. For example, the rebels seized Gwalior, the capital of the Maharajah Scindia, who escaped to Agra. The English had to attack the rebels, retake Gwalior, and restore Scindia. The Maharajah Scindia of Gwalior had deserved well of the English Government. Under every temptation, every threat, and many profound perils from the rebellion, he had remained firm to his friendship. So, too, had Holkar, the Maharajah of the Indore territory. The country owes much to those two princes, for the part they took at her hour of need; and she has not, we are glad to think, proved herself ungrateful. One of those who fought to the last on the rebels' side was the Ranee, or Princess, of Jhansi, whose territory, as we have already seen, had been one of our annexations. For months after the fall of Delhi she contrived to baffle Sir Hugh Rose and the English. She led squadrons in the field. She fought with her own hand. She was en-

gaged against us in the battle for the possession of Gwalior. In the uniform of a cavalry officer she led charge after charge, and she was killed among those who resisted to the last. Her body was found upon the field, scarred with wounds enough in the front to have done credit to any hero. Sir Hugh Rose paid her the well-deserved tribute which a generous conqueror is always glad to be able to offer. He said, in his general order, that "the best man upon the side of the enemy was the woman found dead, the Ranee of Jhansi."

It is not necessary to describe, with any minuteness of detail, the final spasms of the rebellion. Tantia Topee, the lieutenant of Nana Sahib, was taken prisoner in April 1859, was tried for his share in the Cawnpore massacre, and was hanged like any vulgar criminal. The old King of Delhi was also put on trial, and being found guilty, was sentenced to transportation. He was sent to the Cape of Good Hope, but the colonists there refused to receive him, and this last of the line of the Grand Moguls had to go begging for a prison. He was finally carried to Rangoon, in British Burmah. On December 20, 1858, Lord Clyde, who had been Sir Colin Campbell, announced to the Governor-General that the rebellion was at an end, and on May 1, 1859, there was a public thanksgiving in England for the pacification of India.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

## THE END OF "JOHN COMPANY."

WHILE these things were passing in India, it is needless to say that the public opinion of England was distracted by agitation and by opposing counsels. For a long time the condition of Indian affairs had been regarded in England with something like absolute indifference. In the House of Commons a debate on any question connected with India was as strictly an affair of experts as a discussion on some local gas or water bill. The House in general did not even affect to have any interest in it. The officials who had to do with Indian affairs; the men on the Opposition benches who had held the same offices while their party was in power; these, and two or three men who had been in India, and were set down as crotchety because they professed any concern in its mode of government—such were the politicians who carried on an Indian debate, and who had the House all to themselves while the discussion lasted. The Indian Mutiny startled the public feeling of England out of this state of unhealthy languor. First came the passion and panic, the cry for blood, the wholesale executions, the blowing of rebels from guns; then came a certain degree of reaction, and some eminent Englishmen were found to express alarm at the very sanguinary methods of repression and of punishment that were in favour among most of our fellow-countrymen in India.

It was during this season of reaction that the famous discussions took place on Lord Canning's proclamation.

On March 3, 1858, the proclamation was issued from Allahabad to the chiefs of Oudh, and it announced that, with the exception of the lands then held by six loyal proprietors of the province, the proprietary right in the whole of the soil of Oudh was transferred to the British Government, which would dispose of it in such manner as might seem fitting. The disposal, however, was indicated by the terms of the proclamation. To all chiefs and landholders who should at once surrender to the Chief Commissioner of Oudh it was promised that their lives should be spared, "provided that their hands are unstained by English blood murderously shed;" but it was stated that, "as regards any further indulgence which may be extended to them, and the conditions in which they may hereafter be placed, they must throw themselves upon the justice and mercy of the British Government." Read by the light of literalness, this proclamation unquestionably seemed to amount to an absolute confiscation of the whole soil of Oudh; for even the favoured landowners who were to retain their properties were given to understand that they retained them by the favour of the Crown and as a reward for their loyalty. Sir James Outram wrote at once to Lord Canning, pointing out that there were not a dozen landholders in Oudh who had not either themselves borne arms against us or assisted the rebels with men or money, and that, therefore, the effect of the proclamation would be to confiscate the entire proprietary right in the province and to make the chiefs and landlords desperate, and that the result would be a "guerilla war for the extirpation, root and branch, of this class of men, which will involve the loss of thousands of Europeans by battle, disease, and exposure." Lord Canning consented to insert in the proclamation a clause announcing that a liberal indulgence

would be granted to those who should promptly come forward to aid in the restoration of order, and that "the Governor-General will be ready to view liberally the claims which they may thus acquire to a restitution of their former rights."

In truth, it was never the intention of Lord Canning to put in force any cruel and sweeping policy of confiscation. Lord Canning had come to the conclusion that the English Government must start afresh in their dealings with Oudh. He came to the conclusion that the necessary policy for all parties concerned was to make of the mutiny, and the consequent reorganisation, an opportunity not for a wholesale confiscation of the land, but for a measure which should declare that the land was held under the power and right of the English Government. The principle of his policy was somewhat like that adopted by Lord Durham in Canada. It seized the power of a dictator over life and property, the dictator might be able to restore peace and order at the least cost in loss and suffering to the province and the population whose affairs it was his task to administer. But it may be freely admitted that on the face of it the proclamation of Lord Canning looked strangely despotic. Some of the most independent and liberal Englishmen took this view of it. Men who had supported Lord Canning through all the hours of clamour against him felt compelled to express disapproval of what they understood to be his new policy. It so happened that Lord Ellenborough was then President of the Board of Control, and Lord Ellenborough was a man who always acted on impulse, and had a passion for fine phrases. He had a sincere love of justice, according to his lights; but he had a still stronger love for antithesis. Lord Ellenborough therefore had no sooner received a copy of

Lord Canning's proclamation than he despatched upon his own responsibility a rattling condemnation of the whole proceeding. The question was taken up immediately in both Houses of Parliament. Lord Shaftesbury in the House of Lords moved a resolution declaring that the House regarded with regret and serious apprehension the sending of such a despatch, as such a course must prejudice our rule in India by weakening the authority of the Governor-General and encouraging the resistance of rebels still in arms. A similar motion was introduced by Mr. Cardwell in the House of Commons. In both Houses the arraignment of the Ministry proved a failure. Lord Ellenborough at once took upon himself the whole responsibility of an act which was undoubtedly all his own, and he resigned his office. The resolution was therefore defeated in the House of Lords on a division, and had to be withdrawn in a rather ignominious manner in the House of Commons. Lord Canning continued his policy, the policy which he had marked out for himself, with signal success. Within a few weeks after the capture of Lucknow, almost all the large landowners had tendered their allegiance. Lord Canning impressed upon his officers the duty of making their rule as considerate and conciliatory as possible. The new system established in Oudh was based upon the principle of recognising the Talookdars as responsible landholders, while so limiting their power by the authority of the Government as to get rid of old abuses, and protect the occupiers and cultivators of the soil. Canning, like Durham, only lived long enough to hear the general acknowledgment that he had done well for the country he was sent to govern, and for the country in whose name and with whose authority he went forth.

The rebellion pulled down with it a famous old in-

stitution, the government of the East India Company. Before the mutiny had been entirely crushed, the rule of "John Company" came to an end. The administration of India had, indeed, long ceased to be under the control of the Company as it was in the days of Warren Hastings. A Board of Directors, nominated partly by the Crown and partly by the Company, sat in Leadenhall Street, and gave general directions for the government of India. But the Parliamentary department, called the Board of Control, had the right of reviewing and revising the decisions of the Company. The Crown had the power of nominating the Governor-General, and the Company had only the power of recalling him. This odd and perhaps unparalleled system of double government had not much to defend it on strictly logical grounds; and the moment a great crisis came it was natural that all the blame of difficulty and disaster should be laid upon its head. With the beginning of the mutiny the impression began to grow up in the public mind here that something of a sweeping nature must be done for the reorganisation of India; and before long this vague impression crystallised into a conviction that England must take Indian administration into her own hands, and that the time had come for the fiction of rule by a trading company to be absolutely given up. In the beginning of 1858 Lord Palmerston introduced a bill to transfer the authority of the Company formally and absolutely to the Crown. The plan of the scheme was that there were to be a president and a council of eight members, to be nominated by the Government. There was a large majority in the House of Commons in favour of the bill; but the agitation caused by the attempt to assassinate the Emperor of the French, and Palmerston's ill-judged and ill-timed Conspiracy Bill, led to the



sudden overthrow of his Government. When Lord Derby succeeded to power, he brought in a bill for the better government of India at once; but the measure was a failure. Then Lord John Russell proposed that the House should proceed by way of resolutions—that is, that the lines of a scheme of legislation should be laid down by a series of resolutions in committee of the whole House, and that upon those lines the Government should construct a measure. The suggestion was eagerly welcomed, and after many nights of discussion a basis of legislation was at last agreed upon. This bill passed into law in the autumn of 1858; and for the remainder of Lord Derby's tenure of power, his son, Lord Stanley, was Secretary of State for India. The bill, which was called "An Act for the better Government of India," provided that all the territories previously under the government of the East India Company were to be vested in her Majesty, and all the Company's powers to be exercised in her name. One of her Majesty's principal Secretaries of State was to have all the power previously exercised by the Company, or by the Board of Control. The Secretary was to be assisted by a Council of India, to consist of fifteen members, of whom seven were to be elected by the Court of Directors from their own body, and eight nominated by the Crown. The vacancies among the nominated were to be filled up by the Crown; those among the elected by the remaining members of the Council for a certain time, but afterwards by the Secretary of State for India. The competitive principle for the Civil Service was extended in its application and made thoroughly practical. The military and naval forces of the Company were to be deemed the forces of her Majesty. A clause was introduced declaring that, except for the purpose of pre-

venting or repelling actual invasion of India, the Indian revenues should not without the consent of both Houses of Parliament, be applicable to defray the expenses of any military operation carried on beyond the external frontiers of her Majesty's Indian possessions. Another clause enacted that whenever an order was sent to India directing the commencement of hostilities by her Majesty's forces there, the fact should be communicated to Parliament within three months, if Parliament were then sitting, or if not, within one month after its next meeting. The Viceroy and Governor-General was to be supreme in India, but was to be assisted by a Council. India now has nine provinces, each under its own civil government, and independent of the others, but all subordinate to the authority of the Viceroy. In accordance with this Act the government of the Company, the famed "John Company," formally ceased on September 1, 1858; and the Queen was proclaimed throughout India in the following November, with Lord Canning for her first Viceroy. It was but fitting that the man who had borne the strain of that terrible crisis, who had brought our Indian Empire safely through it all, and who had had to endure so much obloquy and to live down so much calumny, should have his name consigned to history as that of the first of the line of British Viceroys in India.

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## CHAPTER XV.

## THE CONSPIRACY BILL.

THE last chapter has told us that Lord Palmerston introduced a measure to transfer to the Crown the government of India, but that unexpected events in the meanwhile compelled him to resign office, and called Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli to power. These events had nothing to do directly with the general policy of Palmerston or Lord Derby. At midday of January 14, 1858, Lord Palmerston seemed to be as popular and as strong as a minister well could be. But on the evening of January 14, Felice Orsini, an Italian exile, made his memorable attempt to assassinate the Emperor of the French. Orsini lost himself, and he drew the English Government down at the same time. Felice Orsini was well known in England. He was a handsome soldierly-looking man, with intensely dark eyes and dark beard, whose one great object was to endeavour to rouse up the English people to some policy of intervention on behalf of Italy against Austria. After a while, however, he found out that England would do nothing. The English Liberals, with the exception of a very few enthusiasts, were just as much opposed to the principle of intervention in the affairs of other States as the Conservatives. But Orsini set himself to devise some explanation for what was simply the prudent and just determination of all the statesmen and leading politicians of the country. He found the explanation in the subtle influence of the Emperor of the French, and he appears

then to have allowed the idea to get possession of him that the removal of the Emperor of the French from the scene was an indispensable preliminary to any policy having for its object the emancipation of Italy from Austrian rule. He brooded on this idea until it became a project and a passion. It transformed a soldier and a patriot into an assassin.

On January 14, Orsini and his fellow-conspirators made their attempt in the Rue Lepelletier in Paris. As the Emperor and Empress of the French were driving up to the door of the Opera-house in that street, Orsini and his companions flung at and into the carriage three shells or bombs shaped like a pear, and filled with detonating powder. The shells exploded, and killed and wounded many persons. So minute were the fragments in which the bombs burst that 516 wounds, great and little, were inflicted by the explosion. Ten persons were killed, 156 were wounded. It was said at the time that the Orsini plot frightened the Emperor of the French into taking up the cause of Italy. Historical revelations made at a later period show that this is altogether a mistake. We now know that at the time of the Congress of Paris Count Cavour had virtually arranged with the Emperor the plans of policy which were afterwards carried out, and that even before that time Cavour was satisfied in his own mind as to the ultimate certainty of Louis Napoleon's co-operation. Those who are glad to see Italy a nation, may be glad to know that Orsini's bombs had nothing to do with her success. Four persons were put on trial as participators in the attempt, three of them having actually thrown the bombs. Only two, however, were executed, Orsini and Pierri; the other two were sentenced to penal servitude for life.

In France an outburst of anger followed the attempt

in the Rue Lepelletier; but the anger was not so much against Orsini as against England. One of the persons charged along with Orsini, although he was not tried in Paris, for he could not be found there, was a Frenchman, Simon Bernard, who had long been living in London. It was certain that many of the arrangements for the plot were made in London. The bombs were manufactured in Birmingham, and were ordered for Orsini by an Englishman. It was known that Orsini had many friends and admirers in this country. The Imperialists in France at once assumed that England was a country where assassination of foreign sovereigns was encouraged by the population, and not discouraged by the laws. The French Minister for Foreign Affairs, Count Walewski, wrote a despatch, in which he asked whether England considered that hospitality was due to assassins. The Duc de Persigny, then Ambassador of France in England, made a very foolish and unfortunate reply to a deputation from the Corporation of London, in which he took on himself to point out that if the law of England was strong enough to put down conspiracies for assassination it ought to be put in motion, and if it were not, it ought to be made stronger. Addresses of congratulation were poured in upon the Emperor from the French army, and many of them were full of insulting allusions to England as the sheltering-ground of assassination. A semi-official pamphlet, published in Paris, and entitled "The Emperor Napoleon the Third and England," actually went the ridiculous length of describing an obscure debating club in a Fleet Street public-house where a few dozen honest fellows smoked their pipes of a night and talked hazy politics, as a formidable political institution where regicide was nightly preached to fanatical desperadoes.

Thus we had the public excited on both sides. The feeling of anger on this side was intensified by the conviction that France was insulting us because she thought England was crippled by her troubles in India, and had no power to resent an insult. It was while men here were smarting under this sense of wrong that Lord Palmerston introduced his famous measure for the suppression and punishment of conspiracies to murder. The bill was introduced in consequence of the despatch of Count Walewski. In that despatch it was suggested to the English Government that they ought to do something to strengthen their law. The words were very civil. Nor was the request they contained in itself unreasonable. Long afterwards this country had to acknowledge, in reply to the demand of the United States, that a nation cannot get rid of her responsibility to a foreign people by pleading that her municipal legislation does not provide for this or that emergency. The natural rejoinder is, "Then you had better make such a law; you are not to injure us and get off by saying your laws allow us to be injured." But the conditions under which the request was made by France had put England in the worst possible mood for acceding to it. Ominous questions were put to the Government in both Houses of Parliament. In the House of Commons Mr. Roebuck asked whether any communications had passed between the Governments of England and France with respect to the Alien Act or any portion of our criminal code. Lord Palmerston answered by mentioning Count Walewski's despatch, which he said should be laid before the House. He added a few words about the addresses of the French regiments, and pleaded that allowance should be made for the irritation caused by the attempt on the life of the Emperor. He was asked a significant question—

had the Government sent any answer to Count Walewski's despatch? No, was the reply; her Majesty's Government had not answered it; not yet.

Two or three days after Lord Palmerston moved for leave to bring in the Conspiracy to Murder Bill. The chief object of the measure was to make conspiracy to murder a felony instead of a mere misdemeanour, as it had been in England, and to render it liable to penal servitude for any period varying from five years to a whole life. Lord Palmerston made a feeble and formal attempt to prove that his bill was introduced simply as a measure of needed reform in our criminal legislation, and without special reference to anything that had happened in France. The law against conspiracy to murder was very light in England, he showed, and was very severe in Ireland. It was now proposed to make the law the same in both countries—that was all. Of course no one was deceived by this explanation. The bill itself was as much of a sham as the explanation. Such a measure would not have been of any account whatever as regarded the offences against which it was particularly directed. Lord Palmerston, we may be sure, did not put the slightest faith in the efficacy of the piece of legislation he had undertaken to recommend to Parliament. He was compelled to believe that the Government would have to do something; and he came, after a while, to the conclusion that the most harmless measure would be the best. Mr. Kinglake moved an amendment, formally expressing the sympathy of the House with the French people, on account of the attempt made against the Emperor, but declaring it inexpedient to legislate in compliance with the demand made in Count Walewski's despatch of January 20, "until further information is before it of the communications of the two Governments

subsequent to the date of that despatch." Mr. Disraeli voted for the bringing in of the bill, and made a cautious speech, in which he showed himself in favour of some sort of legislation, but did not commit himself to approval of that particular measure. The bill was read a first time. Two hundred and ninety-nine votes were for it; only ninety-nine against. But before it came on for a second reading public opinion was beginning to declare ominously against it. The fact that the Government had not answered the despatch of Count Walewski told heavily against them. It was afterwards explained that Lord Cowley had been instructed to answer it orally, and that Lord Palmerston thought this course the more prudent, and the more likely to avoid an increase of irritation between the two countries. But public opinion in England was not now to be propitiated by counsels of moderation. The idea had gone abroad that Lord Palmerston was truckling to the Emperor of the French, and that the very right of asylum which England had so long afforded to the exiles of all nations, was to be sacrificed at the bidding of one who had been glad to avail himself of it in his hour of need.

This idea received support from the arrest of Dr. Simon Bernard, a French refugee, who was immediately put on trial as an accomplice in Orsini's plot. Bernard was a native of the South of France, a surgeon by profession, and had lived a long time in England. The arrest of Bernard may have been a very proper thing, but it came in with most untimely effect upon the Government. It was understood to have been made by virtue of information sent over from Paris, and no one could have failed to observe that the loosest accusations of that kind were always coming from the French capital. Many persons were influenced in their belief of Bernard's in-



nocence by the fact, which does assuredly count for something, that Orsini himself had almost with his dying breath declared that Bernard knew nothing of the intended assassination. Not a few made up their minds that he was innocent because the French Government accused him of guilt; and still more declared that innocent or guilty he ought not to be arrested by English authorities at the bidding of a French Emperor. The debate was over and the Conspiracy Bill disposed of before the Bernard trial came to an end; but we may anticipate by a few days, and finish the Bernard story. Bernard was tried at the Central Criminal Court under existing law; he was defended by Mr. Edwin James, a well-known criminal lawyer, and he was acquitted. The trial was a practical illustration of the inutility of such special legislation as that which Lord Palmerston attempted to introduce. A new law of conspiracy could not have furnished any new evidence against Bernard, or persuaded a jury to convict him on such evidence as there was. In the prevailing temper of the public the evidence should have been very clear indeed to induce an ordinary English jury to convict a man like Bernard, and the evidence of his knowledge of an intended assassination was anything but clear.

In the midst of the commotion caused by Bernard's arrest, Mr. Milner Gibson quietly gave notice of an amendment to the second reading of the Conspiracy Bill. The amendment proposed to declare that while the House heard with regret the allegation that the recent crime had been devised in England, and was always ready to assist in remedying any proved defects in the criminal law, "yet it cannot but regret that her Majesty's Government, previously to inviting the House to amend the law of conspiracy by the second reading of this bill at the

present time, have not felt it to be their duty to make some reply to the important despatch received from the French Government, dated Paris, January 20, 1858, and which has been laid before Parliament." It might have been seen at once that this was a more serious business for the Government than Mr. Kinglake's amendment. In forecasting the result of a motion in the House of Commons much depends on the person who brings it forward. Has he a party behind him? If so, then the thing is important. If not, let his ability be what it will, his motion is looked on as a mere expression of personal opinion, interesting perhaps but without political consequence. Mr. Kinglake was emphatically a man without a party behind him; Mr. Gibson was emphatically a man of party and of practical politics. Mr. Kinglake was a brilliant literary man who had proved little better than a failure in the House; Mr. Gibson was a successful member of Parliament and nothing else. When the debate on the second reading came on it began soon to be seen that the condition of things was grave for Lord Palmerston. Every hour and every speech made it more ominous. Mr. Gladstone spoke eloquently against the Government. Mr. Disraeli suddenly discovered that he was bound to vote against the second reading, although he had voted for the first. The Government, he argued, had not yet answered the despatch as they might have done in the interval, and as they had not vindicated the honour of England, the House of Commons could not entrust them with the measure they demanded. Lord Palmerston saw that, in homely phrase, the game was up. He was greatly annoyed; he lost his temper, and did not even try to conceal the fact that he had lost it. For a genial and kindly as well as a graceful man, it was singular how completely Lord Palmerston always lost his

good manners when he lost his temper. Under the influence of sudden anger, luckily a rare influence with him, he could be actually vulgar. Lord Palmerston, in his reply to Mr. Milner Gibson, showed a positive spitefulness of tone and temper very unusual in him, and especially unbecoming in a losing man. A statesman may rise as he will, but he should fall with dignity. When the division was taken it appeared that there were 215 votes for the second reading and 234 against it. The Government, therefore, were left in a minority of 19; 146 Conservatives were in the majority and 84 Liberals. Besides these there were such of the Peelite party as Sir James Graham, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Cardwell, and Mr. Sidney Herbert. Lord Palmerston at once made up his mind to resign. His resignation was accepted. Not quite a year had passed since the general elections sent Lord Palmerston into power triumphant over the routed Liberals and the prostrate Manchester School. Not quite a year, and now, on the motion of one of the lieutenants of that same party returned to their position again, Lord Palmerston is ejected from office. Palmerston once talked of having his "tit-for-tat with John Russell." The Peace party now had their tit-for-tat with him.

Lord Palmerston had the satisfaction before he left office of being able to announce the capture of Canton. The operations against China had been virtually suspended, it will be remembered, when the Indian Mutiny broke out. England had now got the co-operation of France. France had a complaint of long standing against China on account of the murder of some missionaries, for which redress had been asked in vain. There was, therefore, an allied attack made upon Canton, and of course the city was easily captured. Commissioner Yeh himself was taken prisoner, not until he had been sought

for and hunted out in most ignominious fashion. He was found at last hidden away in some obscure part of a house. He was known by his enormous fatness. One of our officers caught hold of him; Yeh tried still to get away. A British seaman seized Yeh by his pigtail, twisted the tail several times round his hand, and thus made the unfortunate Chinese dignitary a helpless and ludicrous prisoner. When it was convenient to let loose Yeh's pigtail, he was put on board an English man-of-war, and afterwards sent to Calcutta, where he died early in the following year. Unless report greatly belied him he had been exceptionally cruel, even for a Chinese official. The English and French Envoys, Lord Elgin and Baron Gros, succeeded in making a treaty with China. By the conditions of the treaty, England and France were to have ministers at the Chinese Court, on certain special occasions at least, and China was to be represented in London and Paris; there was to be toleration of Christianity in China, and a certain freedom of access to Chinese rivers for English and French mercantile vessels, and to the interior of China for English and French subjects. China was to pay the expenses of the war. It was further agreed that the term "barbarian" was no longer to be applied to Europeans in China. There was great congratulation in England over this treaty, and the prospect it afforded of a lasting peace with China. The peace thus procured lasted in fact exactly a year.

The Ministry of Lord Derby, whereof Mr. Disraeli was leader of the House of Commons, was not supported by a Parliamentary majority, nor could it pretend to great intellectual and administrative ability. It had in its ranks two or three men of statesmanlike capacity, and a number of respectable persons possessing abilities about equal to those of any intelligent business man or

county magistrate. Mr. Disraeli of course became Chancellor of the Exchequer. Lord Stanley undertook the Colonies; Mr. Walpole made a painstaking and conscientious Home Secretary, as long as he continued to hold the office. Lord Malmesbury muddled on with Foreign Affairs somehow; Lord Ellenborough's brilliant eccentric light perplexed for a brief space the Indian Department. General Peel was Secretary for war, and Mr. Henley, President of the Board of Trade. Lord Naas, afterwards Lord Mayo, became chief Secretary for Ireland, and was then supposed to be nothing more than a kindly, sweet-tempered man, of whom his most admiring friends would never have ventured to foreshadow such a destiny as that he should succeed to the place of a Canning and an Elgin, and govern the new India to which so many anxious eyes were turned. Sir John Pakington was made First Lord of the Admiralty, because a place of some kind had to be found for him, and he was as likely to do well at the head of the navy as anywhere else. No Conservative Government could be supposed to get on without Lord John Manners, and luckily there was the Department of Public Works for him.

Lord Stanley was regarded as a statesman of great and peculiar promise. The party to which he belonged were inclined to make him an object of especial pride, because he seemed to have in a remarkable degree the very qualities which most of their leading members were generally accused of wanting. Lord Stanley had a calm, meditative intellect. He studied politics as one may study a science. He understood political economy. He had travelled much; not merely making the old-fashioned grand tour, which most of the Tory country gentlemen had themselves made, but visiting the United States and

Canada and the Indies, East and West. He was understood to know all about geography and cotton and sugar; and he had come up into politics in a happy age when the question of Free Trade was believed to be settled. Lord Stanley was strangely unlike his father in intellect and temperament. The one man was indeed almost the very opposite of the other. Lord Derby was all instinct and passion; Lord Stanley was all method and calculation. Lord Derby amused himself in the intervals of political work by translating classic epics and odes; Lord Stanley beguiled an interval of leisure by the reading of Blue-books. Lord Derby's eloquence when at its worst became fiery nonsense; Lord Stanley's sank occasionally to be nothing better than platitude. The extreme of the one was rhapsody, and of the other commonplace. Lord Derby was too hot and impulsive to be always a sound statesman; Lord Stanley was too coldly methodical to be the statesman of a crisis. Both men were to a certain sense superficial and deceptive. Lord Derby's eloquence had no great depth in it; and Lord Stanley's wisdom often proved somewhat thin. The career of Lord Stanley did not afterwards bear out all the expectations that were originally formed of him. He proved to be methodical, sensible, conscientious, slow. But at the time when he accepted the Indian Secretaryship people on both sides of the political contest looked to him as a new and great figure in Conservative politics. He was not an orator; he had nothing whatever of the orator in language or in temperament. His manner was ineffective; his delivery was decidedly bad. But his words carried weight with them, and even his commonplaces were received by some of his party as the utterances of an oracle. There were men among the Conservatives on the back benches who secretly hoped that

in this wise young man was the upcoming statesman who was to deliver the party from the thralldom of eccentric genius, and of an eloquence which, however brilliantly it fought their battles, seemed to them hardly a respectable sort of gift to be employed in the service of gentlemanlike Tory principles.

The superiority of the Opposition in debating power was simply overwhelming. In the House of Commons Mr. Disraeli was the only first-class debater, with the exception perhaps of the new Solicitor-General, Sir Hugh Cairns; and against him were Lord Palmerston, Lord John Russell, Mr. Gladstone, Sir James Graham, Mr. Sidney Herbert, Mr. Cobden, and Mr. Bright, everyone of them a first-class debater; some of them great Parliamentary orators; some, too, with the influence that comes from the fact of their having led ministries and conducted wars. In no political assembly in the world does experience of office and authority tell for more than in the House of Commons. To have held office confers a certain dignity even on mediocrity. The man who once held office, and who sits on the front bench opposite the ministry, has a sort of prescriptive right to be heard whenever he stands up to address the House, in preference to the most rising and brilliant talker who has never yet been a member of an administration. Mr. Disraeli well knew that his party held office only on sufferance from their opponents. If they attempted nothing, they were certain to be censured for inactivity; if they attempted anything, there was the chance of their exposing themselves to the combined attack of all the sections of the Liberal party. Luckily for them it was not easy to bring about such a combination just yet; but whenever it came, there was foreshown the end of the ministry.

Lord Derby's Government quietly dropped the unlucky Conspiracy Bill. England and France were alike glad to be out of the difficulty. There was a short interchange of correspondence, in which the French Government explained that they really had meant nothing in particular, and it was then announced to both Houses of Parliament that the misunderstanding was at an end, and that friendship had set in again. We have seen already how the India Bill was carried. Lord Derby's tenure of office was made remarkable by the success of one measure which must have given much personal satisfaction to Mr. Disraeli. The son of a Jewish father, the descendant of an ancient Jewish race, himself received as a child into the Jewish community, Mr. Disraeli had since his earliest years of intelligence been a Christian. But he had never renounced his sympathies with the race to which he belonged, and the faith in which his fathers worshipped. He had always stood up for the Jews. He had in some of his novels seemingly set about to persuade his readers that all of good and great the modern world had seen was due to the unceasing intellectual activity of the Jewish race.

Mr. Disraeli had the good fortune to see the civil emancipation of the Jews accomplished during the time of his leadership of the House of Commons. It was a coincidence merely. He had always assisted the movement towards that end; but the success did not come from any inspiration of his; and most of his colleagues in power resisted it as long as they could. In July 1858 the long political and sectarian struggle came to an end when Baron Lionel Nathan de Rothschild was allowed to take his seat in the House of Commons as one of the representatives of the City of London. We have seen how by steps the Jews made their way into



municipal office and into the magistracy. At the same time persistent efforts were being made to obtain for them the right to be elected to the House of Commons. On April 5, 1830, Mr. Robert Grant, then a colleague of one of the Gurney family in the representation of Norwich, moved for leave to bring in a bill to allow British-born Jews to enjoy all the rights of the British subject, without having to profess the religion of the State. At that time the Jews were unable to take the oath of allegiance, inasmuch as it was sworn on the Evangelists. Nor could they take the oath of abjuration, intended to guard against the return of the Stuarts, because that oath contained the words "on the true faith of a Christian."

The debate on Mr. Grant's motion was made memorable by the fact that Macaulay delivered then his maiden speech. The proposal for the admission of Jews to Parliament was supported by Lord John Russell, O'Connell, Brougham, and Mackintosh. Its first reading—for it was opposed even on the first reading—was carried by a majority of eighteen; but on the motion for the second reading the bill was thrown out by a majority of sixty-three, the votes for it being 165 and those against it 228. In 1833 Mr. Grant introduced his bill again, and this time was fortunate enough to pass it through the Commons. The Lords rejected it by a majority of fifty. The following year told a similar story. The Commons accepted; the Lords rejected. Meantime the Jews were being gradually relieved from other restrictions. A clause in Lord Denman's Act for amending the laws of evidence allowed all persons to be sworn in courts of law in the form which they held most binding on their conscience. Lord Lyndhurst succeeded in passing a bill for the admission of Jews to corporate

offices. Jews had, as we have already seen, been admitted to the shrievalty and the magistracy in the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign. In 1848 the struggle for their admission to Parliament was renewed, but the Lords still held out and would not pass a bill. Meanwhile influential Jews began to offer themselves as candidates for seats in Parliament. Mr. Salomons contested Shoreham and Maidstone successively and unsuccessfully. In 1847 Baron Lionel Rothschild was elected one of the members for the City of London. He resigned his seat when the House of Lords threw out the Jews' bill, and stood again and was again elected. It was not, however, until 1850 that the struggle was actually transferred to the floor of the House of Commons. In that year Baron Rothschild presented himself at the table of the House and offered to take the oaths in order that he might be admitted to take his seat. For four sessions he had sat as a stranger in the House of which he had been duly elected a member by the votes of one of the most important English constituencies. Now he came boldly up to the table and demanded to be sworn. He was sworn on the Old Testament. He took the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy; but when the Oath of Abjuration came he omitted from it the words "on the true faith of a Christian." He was directed to withdraw, and it was decided that he could neither sit nor vote unless he would consent to take the oath of abjuration in the fashion prescribed by the law.

Baron Rothschild did not contest the matter any further. Mr. David Salomons was inclined for a rougher and bolder course. He was elected for Greenwich in 1851, and he presented himself as Baron Rothschild had done. The same thing followed; he refused to say the words, "on the true faith of a Christian," and he was

directed to withdraw. He did withdraw. He sat below the bar. A few evenings after a question was put to the Government by a member friendly to the admission of the Jews, Sir Benjamin Hall, afterwards Lord Llanover: "If Mr. Salomons should take his seat, would the Government sue him for the penalties provided by the Act of Parliament in order that the question of right might be tried by a court of law?" Lord John Russell replied on the part of the Government that they did not intend to take any proceedings; in fact, implied that they considered it no affair of theirs. Then Sir Benjamin Hall announced that Mr. Salomons felt he had no alternative but to take his seat and let the question of right be tested in that way. Forthwith, to the amazement and horror of steady old constitutional members, Mr. Salomons, who had been sitting below the bar, calmly got up, walked into the sacred precincts of the House, and took his seat amongst the members. A tumultuous scene followed. Half the House shouted indignantly to Mr. Salomons to "withdraw, withdraw;" the other half called out encouragingly to him to keep his place. The perplexity was indescribable. What is to be done with a quiet and respectable gentleman who insists that he is a member of Parliament, comes and takes his seat in the House and will not withdraw? Mr. Salomons had undoubtedly been elected member for Greenwich by a considerable majority. His constituents believed him to be their lawful representative, and in fact had obtained from him a promise that if elected he would actually take his seat. Many members were of opinion, and eminent lawyers were among them, that in the strictest and most technical view of the law he was entitled to take his seat. Many more were convinced that the principle which excluded him was stupid and barbar-

ous, and that the course he was at present taking was necessary for the purpose of obtaining its immediate repeal.

Therefore any idea of expelling Mr. Salomons was out of the question. The only thing that could be done was to set to work and debate the matter. Lord John Russell moved a resolution to the effect that Mr. Salomons be ordered to withdraw. Lord John Russell, it need hardly be said, was entirely in favour of the admission of the Jews, but thought Mr. Salomons' course irregular. Mr. Bernal Osborne moved an amendment declaring Mr. Salomons entitled to take his seat. A series of irregular discussions, varied and enlivened by motions for adjournment, took place; and Mr. Salomons not only voted in some of the divisions, but actually made a speech. He spoke calmly and well, and was listened to with great attention. He explained that in the course he had taken he was acting in no spirit of contumacy or presumption, and with no disregard for the dignity of the House, but that he had been lawfully elected, and that he felt bound to take his seat for the purpose of asserting his own rights and those of his constituents. He intimated also that he would withdraw if just sufficient force were used to make him feel that he was acting under coercion. The motion that he be ordered to withdraw was carried. The Speaker requested Mr. Salomons to withdraw. Mr. Salomons held his place. The Speaker directed the Sergeant-at-Arms to remove Mr. Salomons. The Sergeant-at-Arms approached Mr. Salomons and touched him on the shoulder, and Mr. Salomons then quietly withdrew. The farce was over. It was evident to everyone that Mr. Salomons had virtually gained the victory, and that something must soon be done to get the House of Commons and the country out of the difficulty.

But the victory was not technically won for some time after. An action was brought against Mr. Salomons, not by the Government, in December 1851, to recover penalties for his having unlawfully taken his seat. The Court of Exchequer decided by three voices to one that the words "on the true faith of a Christian" must be held in law to constitute a specially Christian oath, which could be taken by no one but a Christian, and without taking which no one could be a Member of Parliament. The legal question then being settled, there were renewed efforts made to get rid of the disabilities by an Act of Parliament. The House of Commons continued to pass Bills to enable Jews to sit in Parliament, and the House of Lords continued to throw them out. Lord John Russell, who had taken charge of the measure, introduced his Bill early in 1858. When it came up to the House of Lords it suffered the usual fate. Then Lord Lucan recommended the insertion of a clause in the Bill allowing either House to modify the form of oath according to its pleasure. Lord John Russell objected to this way of dealing with a great question, but did not feel warranted in refusing the proposed compromise. A Bill was drawn up with the clause suggested, and it was carried through both Houses. A Jew, therefore, might be a member of the House of Commons, if it chose to receive him, and might be shut out of the House of Lords if that House did not think fit to let him in. More than that, the House of Commons might change its mind at any moment, and by modifying the form of oath shut out the Jews again; or shut out any new Jewish candidates. Of course such a condition of things as that could not endure. An Act passed not long after which consolidated the Acts referring to Oaths of Allegiance, Abjuration, and Supremacy, and enabled Jews on all

occasions whatever to omit the words "on the true faith of a Christian." Thus the Jew was at last placed on a position of political equality with his Christian fellow-subjects, and an anomaly and a scandal was removed from our legislation.

About the same time as that which saw Baron Rothschild admitted to take his seat in the House of Commons, the absurd property qualification for Members of Parliament was abolished. This ridiculous system originally professed to secure that no man should be a member of the House of Commons who did not own a certain amount of landed property. It had not the slightest real force. Fictitious conveyances were issued as a matter of course. Anyone who desired a seat in Parliament could easily find some friend or patron who would convey to him by formal deed the fictitious ownership of landed property enough to satisfy the requirements of the law. As usual with Parliament, this anomaly was allowed to go on until a sudden scandal made its abolition necessary. One luckless person, who probably had no position and few friends, was actually prosecuted for having made a false declaration as to his property qualification. This practically settled the matter. Everyone knew that many other members of Parliament deserved in point of fact just as well as he the three months' imprisonment to which he was sentenced. Mr. Locke King introduced a Bill to abolish the property qualification hitherto required from the representatives of English and Irish constituencies, and it became law in a few days.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

## DISRAELI'S FIRST REFORM ENTERPRISE.

WHEN Lord Ellenborough abruptly resigned the place of President of the Board of Control he was succeeded by Lord Stanley, who, as we have seen already, became Secretary of State for India under the new system of government. Lord Stanley had been Secretary for the Colonies, and in this office he was succeeded by Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton. For some time previously Sir Edward Lytton had been taking so marked a place in Parliamentary life as to make it evident that when his party came into power, he was sure to have a chance of distinguishing himself in office. His political career had up to this time been little better than a failure. He started in public life as a Radical and a friend of O'Connell; he was indeed the means of introducing Mr. Disraeli to the leader of the Irish party. He began his Parliamentary career before the Reform Bill. He was elected for St. Ives in 1831. After the passing of the Bill, he represented Lincoln for several years. At the general election of 1841 he lost his seat, and it was not until July 1852 that he was again returned to Parliament. This time he came in as member for the county of Herts. In the interval Lytton had succeeded to wealth and to landed estates, and he had almost altogether changed his political opinions. From a poetic Radical he had become a poetic Conservative. It was certain that whatever Lytton attempted he would in the end carry to some considerable success. His first years in the House

of Commons had come to nothing. When he lost his seat most people fancied that he had accepted defeat, and had turned his back on Parliamentary life for ever. But Lytton possessed a marvellously strong will, and had a faith in himself which almost amounted to genius. He seems to have made up his mind that he would compel the world to confess him capable of playing the part of a politician. He was deaf, and his articulation was so defective that most persons who heard him speak in public for the first time found themselves unable to understand him. Such difficulties would assuredly have scared any ordinary man out of the Parliamentary arena for ever. But Lytton seems to have determined that he would make a figure in Parliament. He set himself to public speaking as coolly as if he were a man, like Gladstone or Bright, whom nature had marked out for such a competition by her physical gifts. He became a decided, and even in a certain sense, a great success. He could not strike into a debate actually going on; his defects of hearing shut him off from such a performance; and no man who is not a debater will ever hold a really high position in the House of Commons. But he could review a previous night's arguments in a speech abounding in splendid phrases and brilliant illustrations. He could pass for an orator. He actually did pass for an orator.

Sir Edward Lytton, as Secretary of the Colonies, seemed resolved to prove by active and original work that he could be a practical colonial statesman as well as a novelist, a play-wright, and a Parliamentary orator. He founded the Colony of British Columbia. He sent Mr. Gladstone on a mission to the Ionian Islands. There had long been dissatisfaction and even disturbance in the Ionian Islands. These seven islands were constituted



a sort of republic or commonwealth by the Treaty of Vienna. But they were consigned to the Protectorate of Great Britain, which had the right of maintaining garrisons in them. It seems almost a waste of words to say that the islanders were not content with British government. For good or ill, the Hellenes wherever they are found are sure to be filled with an impassioned longing for Hellenic independence. The people of the Ionian Islands were eager to be allowed to enter into one system with the kingdom of Greece. Their national principles and aspirations, their personal vanities, their truly Greek restlessness and craving for novelty, all combined to make them impatient of that foreign protectorate which was really foreign government. Many English public men, however, were merely angry with these pestilential Greeks who did not know what was good for them. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton had not been long enough in office to have become soaked in the ideas of routine. He thought the causes of the complaints and the dissatisfaction were well worth looking into. He offered therefore to Mr. Gladstone the office of Lord High Commissioner Extraordinary to the Ionian Islands, and Mr. Gladstone, who had been for some years out of office, acting as an independent supporter of Lord Palmerston's Government, accepted the offer and its duties. The appointment created much surprise, some anger, and a good deal of ridicule here at home. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton had alluded in his despatch to Mr. Gladstone's Homeric scholarship, and this was, in the opinion of some politicians, an outrage upon all the principles and proprieties of routine. This, it was muttered, is what comes of literary men in office. A writer of novels is leader of the House of Commons, and he has another writer of novels at his side as Colonial Secretary, and

between them they can think of nothing better than to send a man out to the Ionian Islands to listen to the trash of Greek demagogues, merely because he happens to be fond of reading Homer.

Mr. Gladstone went out to the Ionian Islands, and arrived at Corfu in November of 1858. He called together the Senate, and explained that he had not come there to discuss the propriety of maintaining the English protectorate, but only to inquire into the manner in which the just claims of the Ionian Islands might be secured by means of that protectorate. The population of the islands however persisted in regarding him, not as the commissioner of a conservative English Government, but as "Gladstone the Philhellene." In vain he repeated his assurances that he came to reconcile the islands to the protectorate, and not to deliver them from it. The popular instinct insisted on regarding him as at least the precursor of their union to the kingdom of Greece. The National Assembly passed a formal resolution declaring for union with Greece. All that Mr. Gladstone's persuasions could do was to induce them to appoint a committee, and draw up a memorial to be presented in proper form to the protecting powers. In England Mr. Gladstone was attacked in an absurd manner. He was accused not merely of having encouraged the pretensions of the Ionian Islanders, but even talked of as if he, and he alone, had been their inspiration. National complacency could hardly push sensible men to greater foolishness than it did when it set half England wondering and raging over the impertinence of a Greek population who preferred union with a Greek kingdom to dependence upon an English protectorate. There can be no doubt that the people of the islands had under England's protectorate admirable means of communication

by land and sea, splendid harbours, regular lines of steamers, excellent roads everywhere, while the people of the kingdom of Greece were hardly better off for all these advantages under Otho than they might have been under Codrus. But the populations of the islands persevered in the belief that they understood better what made them happy than anyone else could do. They agitated more strenuously than ever for annexation to the kingdom of Greece. A few years after their wish was granted. The Greeks got rid quietly of their heavy German king Otho, and on the advice chiefly of England they elected as sovereign a brother of the Princess of Wales, the second son of the King of Denmark. Then Lord John Russell, on behalf of the English Government, handed over the Ionian islands to the kingdom of Greece.

The year that followed Mr. Gladstone's mission to the Ionian islands (1859) was one of storm and stress on the European continent. It began with the memorable declaration of the Emperor of the French to the Austrian Ambassador at the Tuileries, that the relations between the two Empires were not such as he could desire. In fact Count Cavour had had his way. He had prevailed upon Louis Napoleon to expel the Austrians from Italy. In the career of Count Cavour our times have seen perhaps the most remarkable illustration of that great Italian statesmanship which has always appeared at intervals in the history of Europe. Louis Napoleon was simply a weapon in the hands of such a man. When once the French Emperor had entered into a compact with him there was no escape from it. Cavour did not look like an Italian; at least a typical Italian. He looked more like an Englishman. He reminded Englishmen oddly of Dickens's Pickwick, with his large forehead, his general look of

moony good-nature, and his spectacles. That commonplace homely exterior concealed unsurpassed force of character, subtlety of scheming, and power of will. Cavour had determined that France should fight Austria. The war was over, one might say, in a moment. Austria had no generals; the French army rushed to success; and then Louis Napoleon stopped short as suddenly as he had begun. He had proclaimed that he went to war to set Italy free from the Alps to the sea; but he made peace on the basis of the liberation of Lombardy from Austrian rule, and he left Venetia for another day and for other arms. He drew back before the very serious danger that threatened on the part of the German States, who showed ominous indications of a resolve to make the cause of Austria their own if France went too far. He held his hand from Venetia because of Prussia; seven years later Prussia herself gave Venetia to Italy.

The English Government had made futile attempts to prevent the outbreak of war. Meanwhile the Conservative Government could not exactly live on the mere reputation of having given good advice abroad to which no one would listen, and they determined to try their hand at a Reform Bill. Mr. Disraeli, as leader of the House of Commons, knew that a Reform Bill was one of the certainties of the future, and that whenever Lord John Russell happened to be in power again he would return to his first love in politics, a Reform Bill. He knew also that a refusal to have anything to do with reform would always expose the Tories in office to a coalition of all the Liberal factions against them. Mr. Disraeli had to choose between two dangers. He might risk all by refusing reform; he might risk all by attempting reform. He thought on the whole the wiser course would be to endeavour to take possession of the reform ques-

tion for himself and his party. The reappearance of Mr. Bright in politics stimulated no doubt this resolve on the part of Mr. Disraeli. It is not likely that the Prime Minister, Lord Derby, took any active interest in the matter. Lord Derby had outlived political ambition, or he had had perhaps all the political success he cared for. He had station of the highest; he had wealth and influence; he had fame as a great Parliamentary debater. Now that Brougham had ceased to take any leading part in debate he had no rival in the House of Lords. He was a sincere man without any pretence; and, if he did not himself care about reform, he was not likely to put on any appearance of enthusiasm about it. Nor did he set much store on continuing in office. He would be the same Lord Derby out of office as in. But this way of looking at things was by no means suitable to his energetic and ambitious lieutenant. Mr. Disraeli had not nearly attained the height of his ambition, nor had he by any means exhausted his political energies. Mr. Disraeli, therefore, was not a man to view with any satisfaction the consequences likely to come to the Conservative party from an open refusal to take up the cause of reform. At a time too when most of the Conservatives, and not a few of the Whigs, regarded Mr. Bright as only an eloquent and respectable demagogue, Mr. Disraeli had made up his mind that the Lancashire orator was a man of genius and foresight, who must be taken account of as a genuine political power. Mr. Bright had for a long time been withdrawn by ill-health from all share in political agitation, or politics of any kind. He now returned to public life. He flung himself into a new agitation for reform, and he was induced to draw up a Reform Bill of his own. It was practically a proposal to establish a franchise precisely like that which we have

now, ballot and all, only that it threw the expenses of the returning officer on the county or borough rate, and it introduced a somewhat large measure of redistribution of seats.

Mr. Disraeli knew well enough that the upper and middle classes cared very little about a new Reform Bill. But it was evident that any political party could appeal to the support of the working-classes throughout the country in favour of any movement which promised reform. In short, Mr. Disraeli knew that reform had to come some time, and he was resolved to make his own game if he could. This time, however, he was not successful. The difficulties in his way were too great. It would have been impossible for him to introduce such a Reform Bill as Mr. Bright would be likely to accept. His own party would not endure such a proposition. Mr. Disraeli's Reform Bill was a curiosity. It offered a variety of little innovations which nobody wanted or could have cared about, and it left out of sight altogether the one reform which alone gave an excuse for any legislation. Lord Grey's Reform Bill admitted the middle-class to legislation but left the working-class out. What was now wanted was a measure to let the working-class in. Yet Mr. Disraeli's scheme made no more account of the working-class as a whole than if they already possessed the vote—every man of them. The English working-classes cried out for the franchise, and Mr. Disraeli proposed to answer the cry by giving the vote to graduates of universities, medical practitioners, and school-masters.

Yet we may judge of the difficulties Mr. Disraeli had to deal with by the reception which even this poor little measure met with from some of his own colleagues. Mr. Walpole and Mr. Henley resigned office rather than have

anything to do with it. Mr. Henley was a specimen of the class who might have been described as fine old English gentlemen. He was shrewd, blunt, and honest, given to broad jokes and to a high-flavoured old-fashioned school of humour. Mr. Walpole was a man of gentle bearing, not by any means a robust politician, nor liberally endowed with intellect or eloquence, but pure-minded and upright enough to satisfy the most exacting. It did not appear to him honourable to support a measure because it had been taken up by one's own party, which the party would assuredly have denounced and opposed to the uttermost if it had been brought forward by the other side. Public opinion admired Mr. Walpole, and applauded his decision. Public opinion would have pronounced even more strongly in his favour had it known that at the time of his making this decision and withdrawing from a high official position Mr. Walpole was in circumstances which made the possession of a salary of the utmost importance to him. Had he even swallowed his scruples and held on a little longer, he would have become entitled to a pension. He did not appear to have hesitated a moment. He was a high-minded gentleman; he could very well bear to be poor; he could not bear to surrender his self-respect.

Mr. Disraeli's ingenious Reform Bill was found out in a moment. Someone described its enfranchising clauses as "fancy franchises;" Mr. Bright introduced the phrase to the house of Commons, and the clauses never recovered the epithet. It would be useless to go into any of the discussions which took place on this extraordinary Bill. It can hardly be said to have been considered seriously. It had to be got rid of somehow, and therefore Lord John Russell moved an amendment, declaring that no readjustment of the franchise would satisfy the

House of Commons or the country which did not provide for a greater extension of the suffrage in cities and boroughs than was contemplated in the Government measure.

Lord John Russell's resolution was carried by 330 votes against 291, or a majority of 39. The Government dissolved Parliament, and appealed to the country. The elections took place during the most critical moments of the war between France and Austria. While such news was arriving as that of the defeat of Magenta, the defeat of Solferino, the entrance of the French and the King of Sardinia into Milan, it was not likely that domestic news of a purely parliamentary interest could occupy all the attention of Englishmen. To many the strength of the Austrian military system had seemed the great bulwark of Conservatism in Europe; and now that was gone, shrivelled like a straw in fire, shattered like a potsherd. In such a condition of things the general election passed over hardly noticed. When it was over, it was found that the Conservatives had gained indeed, but had not gained nearly enough to enable them to hold office, unless by the toleration of their rivals. The rivals soon made up their minds that they had tolerated them long enough. A meeting of the Liberal party was held at Willis's Rooms to arrange on some plan of united action. Lord Palmerston represented one section of the party, Lord John Russell another. Mr. Sydney Herbert spoke for the Peelites. Not a few persons were surprised to find Mr. Bright among the speakers. It was well known that he liked Lord Palmerston little; that it could hardly be said he liked the Tories any less. But Mr. Bright was for a Reform Bill, from whomsoever it should come; and he thought, perhaps, that the Liberal chiefs had learned a lesson. The party contrived to agree upon a



principle of action, and a compact was entered into, the effect of which was soon made clear at the meeting of the new Parliament. A vote of want of confidence was at once moved by the Marquis of Hartington, eldest son of the Duke of Devonshire, and even then marked out by common report as a future leader of the Liberal party. Lord Hartington had sat but a short time in the House of Commons, and he did not then, nor for many years afterwards, show any greater capacity for politics than is shown by an ordinary county member. Nothing could more effectively illustrate one of the peculiarities of the English political system than the choice of the Marquis of Hartington as the figurehead of this important movement against the Tory Government. He was put up to move the vote of want of confidence as the heir of the great Whig house of Devonshire; his appearance in the debate would have carried just as much significance with it if he had simply moved his resolution without an accompanying word. The debate that followed was long and bitter. It was enlivened by more than even the usual amount of personalities. Mr. Disraeli and Sir James Graham had a sharp passage of arms, in the course of which Sir James Graham used an expression that has been often quoted since. He described Mr. Disraeli as "the Red Indian of debate," who, "by the use of the tomahawk, had cut his way to power, and by recurrence to the scalping system hopes to prevent the loss of it." The scalping system, however, did not succeed this time. The division, when it came on after three nights of discussion, showed a majority of 13 in favour of Lord Hartington's motion.

The Queen invited Lord Granville to form a Ministry. Lord Granville was still a young man to be Prime Minister, considering how much the habits of Parlia-

mentary life had changed since the days of Pitt. He was not much over forty years of age. He had filled many ministerial offices, however, and had an experience in Parliament which may be said to have begun with his majority. After some nine years spent in the House of Commons, the death of his father called him in 1846 to the House of Lords. He made no assumption of commanding abilities, nor had he any pretence to the higher class of eloquence or statesmanship. But he was a thorough man of the world and of Parliament; he understood English ways of feeling and of acting; he was a clever debater, and had the genial art—very useful and very rare in English public life—of keeping even antagonists in good humour. The Queen had naturally thought, in the first instance, of Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell; but she found it “a very invidious and unwelcome task” to make a choice between the two statesmen. Her Majesty, therefore, thought a compromise might be best got at if both could be united under the guidance of Lord Granville, the acknowledged leader of the Liberal party in the House of Lords. The attempt was not successful. Lord John Russell declined to serve under Lord Granville, but declared himself perfectly willing to serve under Lord Palmerston. This declaration at once put an end to Lord Granville's chances, and to the whole difficulty which had been anticipated. Lord Granville was not in the slightest degree impatient to become Prime Minister, and indeed probably felt relieved from a very unwelcome responsibility when he was allowed to accept office under the premiership of Lord Palmerston. Lord Palmerston was now Prime Minister for life. Until his death he held the office with the full approval of Conservatives as well as Liberals; nay, in-

deed, with much warmer approbation from the majority of the Conservatives than from many of the Liberals.

Palmerston formed a strong Ministry. Mr. Gladstone was Chancellor of the Exchequer; Lord John Russell had the office of Foreign Secretary; Sir G. C. Lewis was Home Secretary; Mr. Sidney Herbert Minister for War. The Duke of Newcastle took charge of the Colonies, Mr. Cardwell accepted the Irish Secretaryship, and Sir Charles Wood was Secretary for India. Lord Palmerston endeavoured to propitiate the Manchester Liberals by offering a seat in the Government to Mr. Cobden and to Mr. Milner Gibson. Mr. Cobden was at the time on his way home from the United States. In his absence he had been elected member for Rochdale; and in his absence, too, the office of President of the Board of Trade in the new Ministry had been put at his disposal. His friends eagerly awaited his return, and, when the steamer bringing him home was near Liverpool, a number of them went out to meet him before his landing. They boarded the steamer, and astonished him with the news that the Tories were out, that the Liberals were in, that he was member for Rochdale, and that Lord Palmerston had offered him a place in the new Ministry. Cobden took the news which related to himself with his usual quiet modesty. He explained afterwards that the office put at his disposal was exactly that which would have best suited him, and in which he thought that he could do some good. He also declared frankly that the salary attached to the office would be a consideration of much importance to him. At the moment he was a poor man. Yet he did not in his own mind hesitate an instant about Lord Palmerston's offer. He disapproved of Palmerston's foreign policy, of his military expenditure,

and his love of interfering in the disputes of the Continent; and he felt that he could not conscientiously accept office under such a leader. He refused the offer decisively, and the chief promoter of the repeal of the corn laws never held any place in an English Administration. Cobden, however, advised his friend, Mr. Milner Gibson, to avail himself of Lord Palmerston's offer, and Mr. Gibson, who had never stood out before the country in so conspicuous a position as an opponent of Lord Palmerston, acted on the advice.

Lord Palmerston had not made any tender of office to Mr. Bright; and he wrote to Mr. Bright frankly explaining his reasons. Mr. Bright had been speaking out too strongly, during his recent reform campaign, to make his presence in the Cabinet acceptable to some of the Whig magnates for whom seats had to be found. It is curious to notice now the conviction, which at that time seemed to be universal, that Mr. Cobden was a much more moderate reformer than Mr. Bright. The impression was altogether wrong. There was, in Mr. Bright's nature, a certain element of Conservatism which showed itself clearly enough the moment the particular reforms which he thought necessary were carried; Mr. Cobden would have gone on advancing in the direction of reform as long as he lived. Not much difference, to be sure, was ever to be noticed between them in public affairs. But where there was any difference, even of speculative opinion, Mr. Cobden went further than Mr. Bright along the path of Radicalism.

The closing days of the year were made memorable by the death of Macaulay. He had been raised to the peerage, and had had some hopes of being able to take occasional part in the stately debates of the House of

Lords. But his health almost suddenly broke down, and his voice was never heard in the Upper Chamber. He died prematurely, having only entered on his sixtieth year. Macaulay had had, as he often said himself, a singularly happy life, although it was not without its severe losses and its griefs. His career was one of uninterrupted success. His books brought him fame, influence, social position, and wealth, all at once. He never made a failure. The world only applauded one book more than the other, the second speech more than the first. Macaulay the essayist, Macaulay the historian, Macaulay the ballad-writer, Macaulay the Parliamentary orator, Macaulay the brilliant, inexhaustible talker—he was alike, it might appear, supreme in everything he chose to do or to attempt. Macaulay was undoubtedly a great literary man. He was also a man of singularly noble character. He appears to have enjoyed advancement, success, fame, and money only because these enabled him to give pleasure and support to the members of his family. He was attached to his family, especially to his sisters, with the tenderest affection. His real nature seems only to have thoroughly shone out when in their society. There he was loving, sportive even to joyous frolicsomeness; a glad schoolboy almost to the very end. He was remarkably generous and charitable even to strangers; his hand was almost always open; but he gave so unostentatiously that it was not until after his death that half his kindly deeds became known. He had a spirit which was absolutely above any of the corrupting temptations of money or rank. He was very poor at one time, but it did not seem to have occurred to him, when he was poor, that money was lacking to the dignity of his intellect and his manhood; or when he was rich

that money added to it. He had certain defects of temper and manner rather than of character. He was apt to be overbearing in tone, and to show himself a little too confident of his splendid gifts and acquirements: his marvellous memory, his varied reading, his overwhelming power of argument. He trampled on men's prejudices too heedlessly, was inclined to treat ignorance as if it were a crime, and to make dulness feel that it had cause to be ashamed of itself. These defects only are worth mentioning as they serve to explain some of the misconceptions which were formed of Macaulay by many during his lifetime, and some of the antagonisms which he unconsciously created. Absolutely without literary affectation, undepressed by early poverty, unspoiled by later and almost unequalled success, he was an independent, quiet, self-relying man who, in all his noon of fame, found most happiness in the companionship and the sympathy of those he loved, and who, from first to last, was loved most tenderly by those who knew him best. He was buried in Westminster Abbey in the first week of the new year, and there truly took his place among his peers.

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